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["IT IS ONLY A SNOWDRIFT!" SAID LOVEL, AS HE FELT NORA'S HAND.]

## THE CURSE OF THE LESTERS.

### CHAPTER XV.

VANA's aunt and Mr. Graham looked at the old housekeeper with bewildered faces. It seemed almost as though the terror stamped on her features told them without any words that something very dreadful had happened.

The lawyer was not of a romantic temperament, but he had felt a strange interest in David's love affair, and a great desire to make acquaintance with its heroine.

His first impression when he saw Mrs. Robinson's dismay was that poor Miss Tempest had died of grief.

Hepzibah, who knew that kind and true as he was, David Devenish had never really won her niece's heart, could think of nothing.

The man recovered first.

"Come, Mrs. Robinson," he said, cheerfully, "what's the matter? You are frightening this lady terribly. Is Miss Tempest really too ill to come downstairs?"

"Please, sir, she's gone!"

"Gone!" Then, as a thought struck him, "You mean she has gone back to your master's room? You must not let her stay there."

"No, sir; she's just gone, and if I'd not been an old simpleton, I might have known it," here the poor woman began to cry, "when she kissed me, and thanked me for being so kind to her. She must have known very little kindness in her life, poor dear, to think much of the little I showed her! Well, she's gone, ma'am," and Mrs. Robinson looked quite threateningly at the vicar's wife; "and you won't be troubled with her no more."

"I don't understand!" Poor Mrs. Tempest looked helplessly at Mr. Graham. "What does she mean? Where is Vana? I thought she was resting."

"So did I," agreed Mrs. Robinson; "but I can see now she's planned it all from the first. I couldn't make out why she asked me the way downstairs, and how far it was to the high-road. There's a bit of a letter she left, ma'am, but it won't tell you any different. She couldn't bear her life without the master, and so she's taken it."

"Vana would never dream of committing suicide," said Mrs. Tempest, indignantly "she was far too carefully brought up."

Mrs. Robinson shrugged her shoulders, and flounced out of the room.

She had been prepared to love Vana Tempest very dearly for her dead master's sake, and the girl's disappearance grieved her deeply.

"You had better read it," said Mr. Graham, kindly, when they were alone; "but tell me first, Mrs. Tempest, is your niece under your care?"

"She has lived with us a year, and we are all fond of her; but my husband is a poor man, and we have a large family. Of course, it was a great relief to us to think that Vana was provided for; it seemed just a blessing she should have met such a man as poor Mr. Devenish."

The lawyer nodded.

"I begin to understand. She had lost her lover, and all chance of being able to help you, so she thought she would at least free you from the trouble of supporting her. I don't think it's a case of suicide, Mrs. Tempest; but,

poor child, it might be better for her to be sleeping in her quiet grave than alone and friendless in this great cold world."

The letter was very short and very simple. It was blotted with tears, and the writing in many places barely legible, but its purport was plain enough—Vana had gone away.

"You never loved me," began this sad little farewell, "and I have always been a burden to you since I came. David was too good for me. I never deserved his love; but now I have lost him I can at least free you from my support. I cannot die yet, I am so young and strong, and death will not come to those who want him most; but Heaven is merciful, and perhaps some day soon will have pity on me, and take me to my mother."

That was all. There was no signature. There was not the slightest clue to Vana's plans, if, indeed, the poor child had formed any.

The little note was almost pitiful in its shortness and simplicity, but yet it assured them of two things—Vana would never return to Vale Lester Vicarage; and, lonely and broken-hearted though she might be, she would not attempt the life that seemed to her of so little worth.

"What a pity!" exclaimed Mrs. Tempest, ruefully, "when you say Mr. Devreux left her such a lot of money, and she might have lived here like a princess, and helped us along with the children. But Vana never was like other people. If ever she could do any agreeable thing she did."

Then John Graham lost his patience, and, as he told his wife later on, gave Mrs. Tempest a piece of his mind.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" he cried, indignantly. "Here is a girl of nineteen, your own flesh and blood, lost to her home and kindred, penniless, alone, utterly unfitted, from your own showing, to fight her way, and yet, instead of pitying her, all you can do is to regret the wealth you might have shared with her. If that is your mark of human kindness, Mrs. Tempest, I think my poor little ward has chosen wisely in preferring anything to your mercy!"

Hephzibah looked abashed.

"We can't help being poor," she said, doggedly, "and an extra mouth to feed is a burden."

The lawyer did not relent.

"I daresay you knew how to make her useful," he said, coldly. "I make no doubt Vana Tempest paid you for her board by plenty of domestic assistance; but I have no need to bandy words with you, madam. Fortunately, I need not ask your aid in seeking my ward. The Cliffords are named as her personal guardians, while I am trustee to the estate. I daresay between us we shall manage to find the mistress of the White House."

Mrs. Tempest removed herself to the Clifford's for the night, but her cousins gave her scant sympathy.

"I could see you made her miserable at Vale Lester," said Mrs. Clifford, frankly, "and I would never have sent her back to you last September only I fancied the child had a lover in Norfolk. David Devenish just worshipped the ground she walked on. He has left her everything he had in the world, and she would be the richest woman in these parts, only you have made her think herself such a burden she has run away."

"I am sure I never was unkind to her."

"It's pretty little kindness she had to thank you for. Well, Mr. Graham is a clever man, and my Tom has good head on his shoulders; between them they may manage to find poor little Vana; but, if they don't, I wouldn't be in your place, Hephzibah, for a fortune. Why, you must know if the poor child is dead you are her destroyer!"

So Mrs. Tempest returned to Vale Lester only two days after she had left it, out of spirits, and very much dissatisfied with the two things had taken, but yet hoping her husband would not condemn her.

She was completely mistaken; the Vicar had been quite willing that Vana should be treated as a poor relation, quite willing that she should be brought up with a fitting sense of the gratitude she owed her uncle and aunt, but this was only while she remained at the Vicarage.

When he heard she was gone,—that his only sister's child was a homeless wanderer on the face of the earth, he changed his tone, and told his wife plainly this was her work. He seemed to forget the expense Vana had been, to ignore the shadow on her birth, the gulf which separated her from other girls, and to remember only she was a legacy from the little sister he had once dearly loved.

"How shall I meet her mother?" he asked his wife, reproachfully. "When Dorothy looks at me with her beautiful eyes, and asks me what I have done with her child, how am I to answer her?"

"Perhaps she will come back," suggested Mrs. Tempest, hopefully.

The Vicar shook his head.

"She is her mother's child, and Dorothy with all her gentleness was proud. No, Hephzibah, we shall never see her again, unless she is dying, and sends for us to say good-bye."

Mrs. Tempest began to wonder what would become of the White House, but she had the prudence to keep this thought to herself; she knew it would have jarred on her husband in his present mood.

"You'll cheer up," she said, persuasively. "You know the boys are home for their holidays, and the Christmas time. You won't make the poor children unhappy just because of this?"

The Vicar shook his head.

"I don't think I shall ever be the same man if Vana is not found. I feel almost as though I were her murderer. You can try and make things pleasant for the boys, but there must be dull holidays at best. Apart from this dreadful surprise about Vana, there is a cloud over the whole parish."

"You mean Sir George's death?"

"Ay, and the mystery around it. Hephzibah, that woman has been seen in broad daylight walking through the village."

Mrs. Tempest stared.

"Who saw her? Is she taken? Who has won the reward?"

"No one; only two people have seen Miss Sharpe, and both of them seem to have been too frightened to think of the reward. You must keep this matter secret, Hephzibah, but I want your opinion on it."

The wife understood from this their daily life was to go on as usual; she would still be his fellow-worker in all outside matters, but he would never be quite the same to her, never feel quite so tenderly towards her until Vana was found.

No one but herself would note the difference. He would trust her prudence, her judgment, her skill; only when it came to a case for kindness, gentleness, sympathy, he would remember Vana's fate, and take the matter into his own hands.

"If any one saw that woman without raising an alarm they must be an accomplice," said Mrs. Tempest, decidedly. "Why, whoever planned Sir George's death she helped to carry it out!"

"The persons are above suspicion—Miss Devreux and Dr. Stone."

Hephzibah stared in blank amazement.

"Were they out together? I never thought Fenella was a favourite with the doctor."

"She is not; it was because he so doubted her statement that he went to investigate the matter himself."

And the Vicar told his wife the story as he had heard it from the doctor, omitting only two things, the strange attempt to poison Miss Deborah, and the fatal initials on the grey shawl.

There was a moment's pause, then Mrs. Tempest said, thoughtfully,—"I don't believe it!"

"I don't believe it!"

"My dear! both Dr. Stone and Fenella are reliable witnesses. Indeed they are so opposite in character that their testimony being agreed must be believed. You might call Fenella fanciful and nervous, but no one could accuse the doctor of imagination."

"But they had never seen the real Mrs. Sharpe. I don't doubt for a moment they saw some one dressed up to represent her, but I believe it is all a blind, and the real culprit has sent some one down here to represent her and put people off the scent while she escapes."

The Vicar looked thoughtful.

"But as we have no clue at all to Mrs. Sharpe, as there never has been any trace of her after she was seen in Durham, why should she trouble to employ another confederate. Besides, Hephzibah, that's not the worst. Miss Deborah Lester is going the same way as her brother!"

Mrs. Tempest thought he had gone mad.

"Miss Deborah being murdered! James, you must be dreaming!"

"It was the very night you went to York-shire. Fenella found her insensible, and sent off for Dr. Stone, who said she was suffering from the same poison that had destroyed her brother."

Mrs. Tempest looked into the fire. At that moment she felt almost grateful for her poverty, since it at least saved her from such plots as were made against the Cliffords. She was perplexed and troubled.

She knew every creature in Vale Lester, and to think of such things as attempted murders going on in her model parish under her very eyes, as it were, dazed her.

"How is Miss Deborah?" I shall go round the first thing to-morrow."

"You won't be allowed to see her."

"Why not—she too ill?"

Fenella seems to think every one who comes must be armed with poisoned lozenges and arsenic. The poor girl is in a ferment of anxiety, but she ought to be able to tell friends from foes. Percy Lester was here this afternoon in a great state of indignation because he had been refused admittance at the cottage. He said he would not stand being shut out of his own sister's house by a stranger."

"But Fenella is like her own child."

"Yes; but she is no relation really. I did my best to quiet him down, but I thought his anger very natural."

"And were you refused?"

"I did not try. I have sent to inquire twice, but I never asked to see Miss Deborah."

Mrs. Tempest went round to the Cottage the next day about eleven o'clock and asked to see Miss Devreux. Fenella came to meet her with outstretched hands.

As yet the Vicarage disaster was not known in Vale Lester. Mrs. Tempest had answered she had left Vana behind in Yorkshire, and no one guessed how little she really knew of the girl's whereabouts.

"This is good of you," said Miss Devreux, kissing her. "I was hoping to see you. Auntie will like to hear all about poor Vana. Is it not terrible? She must feel just like a widow."

Mrs. Tempest steered clear of Vana's feelings in her reply.

"I feared Miss Deborah would be too ill to see me."

"Auntie! She will enjoy a chat. She is quite well, really, only the doctor said she must be kept quiet."

"But Mr. Percy Lester gave us such an alarming account of her yesterday. He said he had not been allowed a glimpse of her."

Fenella's dark eyes flashed ominously.

"If I have any power with her, he shall never see his sister again. Oh! don't look at me like that, Mrs. Tempest. Dr. Stone says I shall be imprisoned for defamation of character, but I don't care. She is all I have, and I will protect her. She shan't be killed under my very eyes if I can help it."

Mrs. Tempest looked perplexed.

"My dear," she said, breathlessly, "what



can you mean? Surely, you don't think Mr. Percy Lester could—

"I think he administered poison to his sister two nights ago in a glass of wine, and I am ready to swear it in any court of justice."

"It seems so terrible," said Fenella, scornfully. "Men will do a great deal to secure such a prize as that."

But Mrs. Tempest had a little more faith in human nature, despite her sharp manners. "My dear, a man doesn't murder his whole family unless he is out of his mind," she said; but Fenella persisted.

"Sir George is gone," she said, gloomily, "my poor dear aunt is going—unless I can save her. Mrs. Jepson was always a poor, sickly creature who doesn't count. There's no chance of her reaching seventy-five, so you see there will soon be a clear field."

But the other woman persisted in her doubt. "My dear child, just think a moment. Percy Lester would have to wait till he was seventy-five before he gained a penny by his crimes. Men don't commit murders, Fenella, to gain something ten or twelve years hence."

"I don't like Percy Lester. He never looks you in the face, and any one can see there is a secret in his life, else why does his wife have that strange, scared look, as though she were afraid of something being found out?"

Fenella took her visitor in to see the invalid, and Mrs. Tempest was horrified at the change a few days had made in her old friend. Miss Deborah looked as though she had been ill for weeks. There was a pinched expression about her features, and the hand she held out in greeting trembled sadly.

"It's good of you to come," she said, feebly. "Has Fenella told you? I am going, like poor George!"

"Come, come, you must not say that," said the Vicar's wife, kindly. "You shouldn't think of sad things, Miss Deborah. You will be with us many years; I trust yet. Why, what would Fenella do without you?"

Fenella bent over her protectress affectionately.

"You must get well, aunt, for my sake."

"I'd like to," said the old lady, with frank sincerity, "but I doubt it. Fen! I think we Lesters have gone the wrong way to work for twenty years. We've thought of nothing but how to keep ourselves alive. Maybe if we'd forgotten the fortune at stake and just gone on as usual we'd have had a better time of it. Simon was a clever man, and he meant to act kindly by us all, but his will has been nothing but a curse. 'Poor George' used to call it the 'Curse of the Lesters,' and he was about right."

## CHAPTER XVI.

VANA TEMPEST had no plan for her future when she left the house that was to have been her own, and where her dead lover lay sleeping so peacefully.

Had Vana only known his loving provision for her future she would never have wandered forth to seek, not her fortune, but some humble niche in life's great plain; but for the poor child there seemed nothing to look forward to but death.

She was not a coward, but she could not bear the thought of living out her life at Vale Lester in sight of the home of the man she loved.

There could be nothing worse to Vana's ears than the sound of Basil Lester's wedding bells. He had been false and treacherous, and her faith and trust in him were gone for ever, yet somehow she could not bear the thought of living close to the Court, and seeing some fair spring day his wedding procession pass up the churchyard.

Her uncle and aunt had never loved her. She had always been an interloper at the Vicarage. They would not raise her. They would lament over the loss of David Davenish's fortune, and they would not understand that to Vana it was a relief not to bear his ring upon her finger; that, true friend and loyal lover as he had been, she was thankful she had never called him husband.

No! Vana's life belonged to herself. There was nothing much to expect from it, but surely she might spare herself pain.

To her there was but one spot on earth full of miserable associations, and that was Vale Lester. To flee from that—never to see again the scenes among which she had suffered so much—that was Vana's hope.

Her heart almost stood still, as she crept downstairs only a few minutes after Mrs. Robinson had left her. She paused at David's door, and murmured a broken blessing on the memory of the man who had so loved her; then she went on cautiously meeting no one, and so out by the private entrance into the grounds.

She had known this way before, when she came to the White House during her visits to Mrs. Clifford. She remembered the garden entrance was a good half mile nearer Whistly Station, and had resolved to escape by that.

And fortune favoured her. The fly which had brought Mrs. Morton and her mother, weary of waiting, was slowly returning to the station, and Vana, hiring it, was driven to Whistly in time for the afternoon train.

She had very little money in her pocket; but she chanced to have her return ticket in her purse, which prevented her from going to the booking-office, and thence, almost unconsciously, she left Whistly without giving the slightest clue to her destination.

The day was quite closing in by this time. It grew darker and darker, and a strange fear settled on Vana that if she went on to York she would be recognised by the porters, who had seen her with her aunt little more than twelve hours before.

This made her desperate, and so seizing her little bag, the poor child alighted at a small junction between Whistly and York, much used in the summer by excursionists to the different seaside resorts, but given over in winter to almost complete isolation.

It was the dreariest place Vana had ever known. The name "Malton Junction" was aspiring enough, but there seemed no building of any kind within sight but the station.

There were fields on either side. Pleasant enough in summer, but terribly lonely and desolate at half-past five on a November afternoon.

The solitary porter was civil enough, and answered Vana's questions to the best of his ability. The girl's small bag and quiet bearing prevented his questioning if she was a fugitive. He little knew the story of the forlorn little traveller.

"Your friends forgot to meet you, I suppose, miss?" he said, good naturedly, "and it's not a nice walk to Malton on a dark evening like this; but there's a path across the fields, and you can't mistake it, seeing it's a straight line. When you come to the churchyard you'll know you're in Malton, and if you ask at the post-office they'll tell you where any one lives."

And Vana set off.

We most of us know the weary sensation of a walk in the dark in any strange place, even where we are certain of a welcome at its end, but for Vana, there was no such anticipation; when she reached "Malton" she would be as lonely and homeless as she was now in the open fields; she did not even know what to do or where to pass the night; her purse was very light, and a lodging would be costly; perhaps there was a little country inn that would take her in just for that one night, and to-morrow she must press on to some big town where she could hide herself and earn money.

And this was the child David Davenish, would so faint have sheltered from every breath of trouble; this was the little girl whose future he fondly hoped he had at least secured; his great heart was still for ever, and his little

love was alone wandering in the bleak country fields in the December darkness.

Vana was not afraid, all her fears pointed to a detection by her aunt, and being taken back to Vale Lester; every step she took led her farther away from Mrs. Tempest and lessened the chance of her being followed. At first this buoyed her up, the darkness, the loneliness had no terrors for her, she went on and on, and as one with a great end in view, and no time to feel hunger, or cold, or weariness.

But when she had walked about two miles, her courage began to fail her; she was faint and heartick, she had listened carefully to the porter's directions; could she possibly have mistaken them? He had called "Malton" a mile and a half, she had waited for more than an hour, but yet she saw no trace of a village. He had told her to look out for the church, but she could see no sign of one; poor Vana began to think she must have lost her way, and gone perhaps aimlessly wandering round and round in a circle on the open moorland. A great longing came on her to sit down, she was so tired, so deadly tired and faint, her limbs ached so, and she was so cold, a strange sleepy drowsiness stole over her. Why not sit down? In a little while then she knew her eyes would close, hunger and cold and weariness would master to her no more. It would not trouble her then that Basil Lester was false, for her sleep would be changed by the bitter cold into death, and she would not open her eyes again upon the world she had found so hard.

Poor little Vana!

It was such a terrible temptation; no one wanted her, and she was so tired, it would so soon be over, and there would be no one to mourn. Ah me, such conflicts as Vana's are fought out oftener than we know of. When I hear of the courage with which some men brave death, it comes to me with a sad recollection that there are those who display just as much courage in braving life.

And Vana braved it.

She thought of her mother, her beautiful, sad, young mother, who had charged her to come to her in Heaven; and she thought of David and his great love. This gave her courage.

With a dreary little sigh she collected her spent faculties, and plodded onwards.

She saw a light at last. It seemed very far away, and she knew it could not come from the church; but perhaps she had misread her way, and so come out at the other end of the village.

The light seemed to fill Vana with a new hope, and she followed its bright ray with fresh energy.

The way was long and tiring, but at last she reached the friendly beacon, and then imagine her disappointment—it came from a private house. A large, comfortable-looking, red brick mansion, evidently some rich man's home, which stood in its own wide grounds, and was, as far as Vana could tell, no nearer the village than the desolate station she had left so long before.

There was rejoicing at this house, seemingly, for the windows blazed with light, and the friendly lamp at the gate—which had lured Vana on—shed forth a warm, bright glow.

There were happy hearts and cheerful voices gathered beneath that ample roof, and Vana was alone.

Somewhat it seemed to Vana this was to be her life's portion. Always to see ease and happiness quite near her, but never to enjoy them herself; to see happy faces around her, and yet never belong to them.

What was she to do? It could not be far from eight o'clock, and she was still without a shelter for the night.

If only this brightly-lighted mansion had been a little cottage she might have gone up to the door and asked for a night's lodging, but that was not to be thought of now.

Would it do to creep round humbly to the back entrance and ask a servant to direct her to the village?

It seemed a feeble hope, but it was her only one.

She had travelled all the previous night; she had gone through enough sorrow and agitation to break down a stronger frame, and she looked just like some poor little white ghost as, after a moment's hesitation, she pushed open the gate and entered.

It was a long way up to the house, or it seemed so to Vana's weary feet, and even then she could not find the door.

Most of the blinds were lowered, but one of the windows had been forgotten, and through this Vana caught sight of a young girl looking up lovingly into an elder's lady's face—mother and child, probably—and there came a strange lump into Vana's throat as she watched them.

Lord and Lady Redmond were spending the winter at their country house with their adopted daughter and the young cousin who must, it seemed probable, one day succeed to the Redmond peerage and entailed property.

A marriage between Nora and young Lovel Delamere was Lord Redmond's fondest dream, but as yet he had no certainty of its accomplishment.

Sir Lovel was often his guest, a brave, high-spirited young fellow, with warm affections. He had so few family ties, that he said he considered second cousins as quite near relations.

He and Nora were the best of friends, but as yet they had shown no signs of wishing to be more so.

Both were fancy-free (unless they really had a serious attachment for each other); both were young and highly-born, for Nora was the child of Lady Redmond's sister.

Sir Lovel had an ample fortune without counting on the Redmond property, and her uncle had saved a handsome provision for Nora.

It would have been in all ways a most suitable match, and everyone thought so, excepting Lady Redmond.

"I can't help it, dear," she said, when her husband reproached her for not concurring in his wishes. "I am as fond of Lovel as you can be, but I can't forget that the Delameres are famous for making unhappy marriages."

"My dear, that's only fancy."

Lady Redmond persisted.

"Sir Claude married an heiress for her money, and made her wretched."

"I am quite sure Lovel's father never married my cousin for money," said Lord Redmond.

His wife's eyes filled.

"No, he worshipped the ground she walked on, and her heart was in some one else's grave. She never deceived him. She told him the truth before she married him, and I believe he was always thankful; he called her his wife for a year, but I don't call that a happy marriage."

"Well, Nora has not buried her heart in any one's grave, and Lovel has too much money of his own to be accused of wanting hers, so I really think, my dear, we need not fear that history will repeat itself if they make up a match."

But they had not done so at this time. Lord Redmond was in Ireland on business, and Sir Lovel was staying at Redmond House, there were no other guests.

The many lights which had made poor Vana think of some festivity were but the ordinary number. Lady Redmond loved light, and would always have her house radiant. She said in that lonely spot they needed all the brightness they could get indoors.

Nora had been talking to her of Christmas, and making plans for its celebration when Sir Lovel came in for coffee. He was thoroughly at home with Miss Redmond—(she had taken her uncle's name when she first came to him)—indeed many would have taken them at first sight for brother and sister, so friendly was their intercourse, they called each other cousin, but really there was no tie at all between them.

"Lovel!" cried Miss Redmond, as she dispensed the coffee, "I have just been thinking what unfortunate people you and I are; actually we have hardly any relations."

"You ought to be content with one uncle and aunt, Miss Nora. I know I should."

"But they are actually my only two relations."

"I can boast one more," said Lovel, gayly. "Mrs. Lester is my fourth cousin; at least I think so."

"The sister-in-law of that poor man who was murdered," commented Lady Redmond; "but, Lovel, your father had a sister?"

"A half-sister," corrected Sir Lovel, rather gravely.

"Well, she would be your aunt."

The young man shook his head.

"She is nothing to me."

"Do you mean she is dead?"

"I—I don't know. Aunt (he often called her so) I will tell you all I can, and then you will understand why I never speak of the subject. When my father was dying, he told me he had once had a half-sister who had married a Mr. Devreux. He charged me by all I held most sacred never to see her daughter."

"She must have married beneath her?"

"I don't know. If ever she was in want of money and applied to me, he charged me to help her liberally, but he commanded me solemnly never to hold any personal intercourse with her."

"How very strange," said Nora.

But the older lady understood. She knew that Lovel's grandfather had been a bad husband.

It was more than probable that his son, out of respect for his own mother, had resented his second marriage, and carried his animosity even so far as to forbid any intercourse between his boy and his half-sister's child!

"I would never have mentioned it," she said, kindly, "had I guessed it was a painful subject."

"It is not that," said Lovel, simply, "I should rather call it a mystery. My father was such a noble-hearted, generous man, I am content to respect his wishes, and I obey them; but to strangers they might seem harsh, that is why I never mention the subject."

"How bitterly cold it is," said Nora, "we shall have splendid skating to-morrow."

"Unless the snow keeps you indoors; there is going to be a pretty heavy fall."

"Lovel! I am sure there were no signs of snow when I came in from my ride."

"And how long is that ago?"

She laughed.

"I forget."

She was a very pretty girl, not beautiful but attractive. Hers was a thorough English face, with brown hair and eyes, a fresh healthy colour, and a pleasant expression.

Whoever married her would have a sweet tempered intelligent wife, but her face did not haunt one's memory as Vana Tompest's did, and neither had it the weird charm of Fenella Devreux's beauty.

She was dressed in white silk, with a pale pink stripe; there were gold ornaments on her neck and arms, and flowers in her hair. She looked like a vision of prosperity.

"Let me open the window just a tiny way and look out," she said, pleadingly. "You know how anxious I am about the skating, aunt."

Lady Redmond smiled, and Lovel went to do the spoilt child's bidding.

"You will be frozen," he said, laughingly, as he drew up the blind, and then he reached a soft white shawl from the sofa and wrapped it gently round the pretty head. This precaution taken, he flung open the French window and stepped on to the broad terrace which stretched beyond.

It was as he said, the snow had fallen heavily, and was still descending. There seemed little chance of its leaving off before morning.

He was just going to close the window when he felt Nora's hand upon his arm.

"Lovel, what is that?" and she pointed to what seemed a piled-up mass of snow. "It looks just like a grave."

"You foolish child," he said, lightly, "it is only a snow drift," but seeing she was not satisfied he put out his hand and touched the still, white mound.

Then his face grew very grave, and Lady Redmond, who had joined them, felt there was something wrong.

"Go and ask Campbell to come here, Nora," said her aunt, but Nora lingered.

"Is it some one dead?" whispered the girl, with a tear in her eyes. "Oh! Lovel, has some one crept up here to die alone and uncared-for while we were so happy?"

Lovel glanced at Lady Redmond's kind face for permission, and then raising the strange burden in his strong arms he raised it tenderly, swept off the heavy covering of snow very gently, and laid upon Lady Redmond's sofa the motionless form of a young girl!

Was she dead? How came she there at their doors on that bitter night? Did she come there for alms, or had she just crept into some quiet place to die?

These were the questions which troubled Lovel Delamere and Lady Redmond, but there was no place for them in Nora's heart. She just knelt down, her silken draperies touching those snow-laden ones, and chafed the stranger's ice-cold hands as tenderly as though they had been sisters.

Lovel wondered her aunt could bear to see her idolised child ministering to the poor, lonely wail.

Somehow all idea of contact between these two pained him, and he would have tried to make Nora desist, but Lady Redmond as she rang for assistance only said gently through her tears—

"Let Nora help her. Poor child! she looks so young to be so alone and desolate. She may have been mistaken and wayward, Lovel, but even so, I think the snow has washed all faults away."

And Lovel marvelled at the charity in those kindly words, and wondered whether he had introduced a dead girl or a living sufferer into the Redmonds' splendid house.

(To be continued.)

The following recipes for sea-sickness are to be found in various medical handbooks, but we don't believe that if you took one, or two, or, indeed, the whole lot, you would avoid the inevitable:—

- (1) Brandy and water.
- (2) Brandy neat.
- (3) Eat a hearty meal before going.
- (4) Do not eat for a month before going.
- (5) Croscote.
- (6) Epsom Salts.
- (7) Munch a biscuit all the time.
- (8) Lie down all the time.
- (9) Keep moving briskly on the deck.

DRESSING WOMEN.—I have always held that women dress better than the male creature can, writes a celebrated woman of fashion from Paris. Men have no sense of the *chignon*. They know how to outline a fine figure; but there are so few really statuesque beauties in the world! Female dressmakers understand best how to amuse the eye, to draw it from defects of face and figure, and they are full of tricks and stratagems which the masculine brain is unable to evolve. A dress made by a clever dressmaker well up in her business is designed with a view to manslaughter. The other evening I was astonished at the fine art of which Madame G—, the milliner, gave proof, explaining to me how best to hide the "invasion of embonpoint," and to seem slim when alimness is a thing of the past. The dress should be loose and the draperies be kept as much as possible in vertical folds, the straight line being here and there departed from merely to avoid monotony and stiffness.



## WHEN SHALL WE TWO MEET AGAIN?

—10—

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

#### A NEW FRIEND.

HILDA ROMER was wildly anxious to relieve Lady Dacre's mind about Ronald Treherne's safety, and yet was puzzled how to do so without offending her.

She had never told her that she had discovered his identity with that Ralph Treherne whom she had so hastily condemned "as a very wicked man."

The same act which had seemed a crime in the stranger whom she had never seen, contracted into a very venial sin when the perpetrator was a man whom she loved and honoured; and yet, young as she was, she was conscious that the world would expect Lady Dacre to look on it in a very different light, and be very much shocked if she failed to do so.

It would therefore be rather awkward to take it for granted that she was very much interested in Treherne's safety; so Hilda sat alone in the large drawing-room with her pretty brows drawn together, in a state of great perplexity.

Presently a bright idea occurred to her. Everybody knew that Sir Thomas Dacre affected the warmest friendship for Treherne, so it would be easy to send a message to Lady Dacre, asking her to relieve her husband's anxiety about him, and at the same time she would learn the glad tidings for herself.

Fearing lest Mrs. Gifford should return before she effected her purpose, she jumped up, went to a writing-table, opened a smart blotting-book and found all the materials she wanted. Then she dashed off the following few lines in her eagerness to do as she would be done by.

"DEAR LADY DACRE—

"Will you tell Sir Thomas that Mr. Treherne is safe and sound at the Tower. He was very nearly drowned, I believe, but the dear old Colonel saved him. So sorry to hear you are unwell, I daresay you are tired out with nursing for you never think of yourself—do you? Come and see us soon."

"Your ever affectionate,

"HILDA E. ROMER."

Then she got up to ring the bell, and had already stretched out her hand to reach it, when a pleasant voice which seemed to come from close behind her said,—

"Will you allow me to do that for you?"

Hilda started and looking round quickly saw a young man standing in the middle of a Persian rug, and regarding her confusion with evident amusement. He had a pleasant face, rather long and thin, a well-shaped somewhat large nose, an infinitesimal moustache, and a pair of sleepy blue eyes. He rang a peal on the bell, then looked at her letter inquiringly.

"Is that for the post?"

"No, for Lady Dacre," she said with great reserve, for she was angry with herself for blushing, and indignant with him for looking amused.

"Why didn't you say that before? I would have flown with it to my cousin with the greatest pleasure."

"You never asked me if it were for the post until you had rung," walking slowly towards the window.

"True, the fault was mine. I hope this is good news," taking up the letter, and giving it to the footman who came in answer to his summons. "For Lady Dacre, at once," he said, briefly, and then followed Hilda to the other end of the room. "Can you tell me why my cousin looks like a walking ghost? They tell me she fainted last night."

"Did she, poor thing?" with intense interest. "I'm not at all surprised."

"You look as if you could a tale unfold,"

and his half-open eyes twinkled visibly under his long lashes. "Tell me in confidence. Is the old fellow a second Bluebeard?"

"In confidence!" she repeated, scornfully, "when I don't even know who you are!"

"Val Donaldson, at your service," he said, with a low bow. "Must I pursue you to the Castle before you will deign to receive me as a friend?"

"How did you know that I lived at the Castle?" looking up into his face in her surprise, but dropping her lashes quickly, for there was something in his eyes which made her blush again like a Baroness Rothschild rose.

"Because, before coming to a place, I always ask about its attractions," he said, significantly, and then seeing that she rather resented the implied compliment, and threw back her small head with a touch of haughtiness, he added, quickly, "You brought good news, I'm sure. Would it be very wrong to ask what it was?"

"Not at all," she said, simply, and then she forgot all self-consciousness, and looked up with shining eyes. "We thought that a great friend of yours, Mr. Treherne, was drowned, for his boat floated back bottom upwards; and early this very morning the news came that he was safe. O, you don't know what it was to us! Will, my brother, begged me to go over to Broadbent, and I didn't get home till nearly ten, and mamma was so frightened, and even then I didn't know for certain, and all the night through I couldn't sleep for thinking and wondering and fearing."

"Mr. Treherne is a very happy man," said Val Donaldson, with a slight frown.

"Indeed, he isn't!" looking very serious. "Misfortunes come upon him as fast as they can. The other day he was nearly buried alive in a mine."

"And did you go and dig him out?"

"We all went. Oh I hope he will be at the Castle when you come over," she said impulsively.

"I sincerely hope he won't," he answered, promptly.

Her face changed, and she regarded him in grave surprise.

"I can't see why you should say that of our greatest friend?"

He laughed.

"Just for that very reason. If this paragon were there I should be nowhere."

"Papa never neglects his guests!" with a pretty assumption of dignity.

"But you might neglect a stranger for the sake of a friend."

"I'm not out, so it doesn't matter what I do," she said, simply.

"I hope you won't be out when I come!"

"No; not till next year."

"By Jove, what a prisoner you will be!" She looked at him doubtfully.

"Is it your way always to laugh at people?"

"Only sometimes. I'm so thankful to be able to raise a smile. You see I'm alone here with nothing to amuse me. My host in bed, my hostess nowhere to be seen," raising his eyebrows dolefully.

Her tender heart was touched at once. He must be terribly dull, she thought, in that large house which always seemed so quiet and melancholy, and perhaps she had been over quick to take offence.

"If you like to come over to us, pray do. We have one or two men staying with us, and Mrs. Gifford is considered very amusing. I'm sure mamma would be very happy to see you," with a graceful bend of her head, as she walked towards the door.

"You've left out the most important item," following her quickly, so as to reach the door first, and turning back to face her in her sweet girlish beauty, as he held the handle in his hand. "Shall you be there, and shall you be happy to see me?"

"I shall very likely be with Wilfred, and it isn't every one who likes to be shut up in a room, not a sick room quite—but very nearly.

"I don't mind it of course," she said with a smile.

"And I should like to be shut up in any room with your brother and you," he said with unusual fervour. "I've a vocation for invalids," opening the door with great reluctance, but he saw that he would not be allowed to keep it shut any longer, "especially boys."

"Ah, and so has Mr. Treherne."

"Hang Mr. Treherne? No, forgive me, I don't mean that, but I shan't have a chance if he's there, and it's human nature to be selfish, isn't it?" he added appealingly.

"I know a few people who are not," she said quietly, as she looked up the stairs to see if Mrs. Gifford were not coming.

"Mr. Treherne, of course," he suggested resentfully.

"Yes, he is more unselfish than any one else in the world. Oh, here you are!" as Kitty came tripping down the stairs with a decided air of triumph. "I thought you were never coming."

"I've got what I wanted," and she held up the carte-de-visite, with sparkling eyes, but carefully covering the writing with her thumb.

"What have you got there?" staring at it with some curiosity, but not able to see it in its present position.

"Mr. Treherne's photograph," said Kitty, laughing. "It was a long ride to take for so small a thing, was it not?"

"These people have gone mad over this fellow," Val Donaldson thought angrily; but the next moment his brow cleared, for Hilda remembered his existence, and introduced him to Mrs. Gifford. Kitty immediately monopolised him, and talked to him so hard that he could not get a word from Hilda except thanks, when he put her on her pony. Kitty looked over her shoulder and waved her hand, but Hilda kept her head as straight as Jim's, and seemed to be in a hurry to get home.

"The prettiest little thing, I ever saw!" murmured Mr. Donaldson to himself as he stood with his hands in his pockets watching the two graceful figures disappear down the drive.

"And the best of it is she's as simple as a daisy. See if I won't cut out this Treherne, and carry off the dearest little girl in the county. Ah, no," shaking his head, "matrimony's not in my line. I wouldn't be bothered with a wife for anything," and taking a cigarette out of his case, he strolled off to the stables.

As he was on his way, a golden head was thrust out of one of the upper windows and a sweet voice called out cheerfully, "Coming directly; would you care to go for a stroll?"

"I should be charmed," he shouted out in reply, "hope you are pretty fit."

"Oh, yes, I feel ever so much better."

"Wonder if it had anything to do with that little note. A most surprising recovery," he soliloquised. "Feel as if I were in the thick of a three-volume novel."

Val Donaldson felt this still more when he and Lady Dacre took their walk, and met Mr. Verreker on the way to the village.

He gave them a graphic account of their adventures the night before, and made one heart thrill with thankfulness as he described their sudden revulsion from despair to joy, when Ponto jumped into the water and found his master on the Maiden's rock.

"But how did he get there?" asked Cyrilla, looking down on the ground to hide the tears which would gather under her lashes.

Paul Verreker looked thoughtful as he answered gravely,—

"As to that I can't say. He had been missing almost from the moment he returned from the Castle. The strange thing was that he had not even waited to change his dress-clothes for something more suitable for the water."

Val Donaldson looked round, caught sight at the moment of his cousin's face, and saw by the sudden flush on her cheeks and the un-

steadiness of her under-lip that something in the Rector's words had moved her strangely. But she only said quickly,—

"I think we must be moving on, or we shall be home in time for luncheon."

Vetrekker went off at once, and the two turned back. When they came to a door in the wooden paling which surrounded Woodlands Cyrilla hesitated.

"Could we get in there out of this dirty road?" asked Mr. Donaldson.

"Yes, we could; this place belongs to my husband. It is let to Colonel Gordon, but he is sure to be at Broadbent now," opening the door with a key she usually carried in her pocket.

Val Donaldson admired the place immensely, but wondered why his companion grew more and more silent and abstracted as they wandered on under the shade of some grand old beeches, with the pleasant sound of running water in their ears and occasional pretty views of the old picturesque house, now radiant with hanging festoons of crimson Virginia creeper.

He could not tell that every little winding path, every weird stump, every drooping branch and every grassy glade, reminded her of a time when her heart felt as light as a happy child's, and she never was lonely because Ralph Treverian was always there or always coming.

Suddenly they came upon an ordinary-looking man lounging on a rustic seat, embowered in wild honey-suckle.

It was with indignation that she recognised Jacob Smith, for he seemed to desecrate the place by his odious presence.

His hat was on his knees, and the piece of sticking-plaster, plainly visible on his left temple, gave a sinister look to his plain face. He had been indulging in a dose, but got up hurriedly as he was roused by Mr. Donaldson's voice.

As she touched his hat respectfully, having put it on his head for that purpose, Lady Dacre said, coldly,—

"I didn't know if you are aware that you are trespassing."

Jacob Smith smiled.

"I have Sir Thomas's permission to make use of any approach to his house that I like."

"I hope you have not seen Sir Thomas today?" she asked, with a slight frown.

"Only for five minutes, my lady," with a twinkle in his left eye, and then he raised his hat and walked on.

"Detestable man!" she exclaimed. "Oh, Val, why didn't you stop him? If Sir Thomas couldn't see you, was it likely that he would be well enough to see that creature on business?"

Val shrugged his shoulders. "What could I do? I'd have stood like a sentinel at his door if you had only given the word, and I wouldn't have even let that charming Mrs. Gifford through, however sweetly she smiled."

"Mrs. Gifford—has she been to see him? Do you mean she asked for Sir Thomas?" looking very angry.

"I suppose so—she left that charming little girl down stairs, so I didn't object."

"I wonder what mischief she can have been up to."

"Why, Cyril, I believe you are jealous! What a joke!" he exclaimed, with a laugh. "I tell you for your comfort that the man who preferred that Mrs. Gifford to you would be a thundering idiot!"

"Oh, Val! What a goose you are!" with an impatient sigh. "What should I care if Venus herself came to see him, so long as she made no mischief?"

"Is that pretty little woman a spiteful cat?" he asked in surprise.

"Yes," she said, bitterly, "but it is no use talking about it."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"YOU WANTED ME TO DIE!"

To the most casual eye it would have seemed that something unusual was going on in Broadbent. The women stood about gossiping, the children played carelessly in the middle of the road, and all the men who were off work for the moment were standing outside the north adit with their pipes in their mouths, their hands in their pockets, holding earnest consultation together.

"I can't have a hand in this," said Mr. Harewood as he joined one of the groups, "but I wish you all success, and I advise you to start at once, as I hear Mr. Treherne is better to-day, and I think he will soon be coming down to the mine, and it wouldn't do to meet him on the road."

The men took the sub-manager's advice, and went up the road, all the groups converging gradually into one long procession without a banner or a drum to give it any outward importance.

Behind the men came the women, and, needless to say, the children, who were not at all inclined to stay at home and look after the kettle, &c., when their mothers were enjoying half-an-hour of idleness.

It was a bright October day with a cheerful sunshine and a crisp cold wind, which brought a radiant colour to the palest cheek, and lent new energy to tired limbs.

Treherne had been ill for a long time, whilst his enemy, on the contrary, was imbibing new health and strength, and the whole supervision of the work at the mine had fallen upon Colonel Gordon's shoulders. His time had been divided between looking after his men and nursing Treherne; but it was the latter which had engrossed all his thoughts, and filled him with the greatest anxiety.

During his absence one day, Dr. Adams had cut off all his patient's hair, for Ronald was in a high state of fever, and his head was as hot as lighted lava. The new hair which grew after this was of the richest golden brown, and if Hilda Romer had seen him then, she would have had no difficulty in believing him to be a young man.

This return to his former colour might be a source of great danger to Treherne, and the Colonel was fully aware of it; but how to remedy this he did not know without letting Dr. Adams—a kind-hearted little man, who could not keep a secret to save his life—find out that it had been bleached artificially.

Weston would have to know it; and, besides this, Treherne was too ill to be worried by anything of the kind.

During the whole long illness, the Tower had been besieged by kind inquiries, but no message of any kind had come from Mount-sorrel.

When the Colonel had time to think of this, he felt sure that the Baronet was trying to forget his former friendship for Treherne in order to prepare his grand coup of revenge.

All the neighbourhood would have cried out if he had pestered the last moments of a dying man; but, as soon as Treherne was restored to health, the danger would begin over again.

Val Donaldson soon found out that he could not please his cousin better than by bringing her tidings of "that fellow Treherne;" and as there seemed to be some strong reason for his not going direct to the lonely Tower, his anxiety for news took him very often to the Castle.

His friendship with Hilda and Wilfred made long strides, but they would both have laughed to scorn the idea of his supplanting Ronald Treherne.

Wilfred was doing his very best to get well in order to be ready for any emergency that might arise, for he could not bear the thought that he would not be able to stand by his friend's side in the hour of danger.

As to that hour of danger, whilst his friends in all directions were watching and waiting in

anxious suspense, Ronald had begun to think that it would never come.

He was lulled into a state of false security by Sir Thomas's silence; and during the long hours of incapacity, when he had nothing to do but to lie still and think, he had come to the conclusion that he had nothing more to fear.

It seemed to him impossible that anyone calling himself a gentleman should trump up an old charge against a man whose services he had claimed almost as a right during his last illness, and whose guest he had been for several nights.

He might wish to keep him at a distance when he found out who he was; he might forbid him to set foot in Mount-sorrel—and of that Treherne would have admitted the justice—but to go further, and attempt to ruin a man's life because of one passionate blow given in a moment of madness when the whole world seemed turning upside down, would be an outrageous thing that even if the Baronet wished to do it he would be obliged to forbear for very shame.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Colonel Gordon, going to the door, and staring at the crowd of men coming up the hill. "Has anything gone wrong? Or are they coming to make so big a complaint that it will take half the mine to do it?"

Treherne's curiosity was excited, and he came and stood by the Colonel's side, watching the men with great interest.

Matthew Hewitt stood forward as spokesman.

"Mornin', Colonel; mornin', Mr. Treherne. Seein' as 'ow Mr. Treherne has earned the respect—and I make so bold has to say the affection—of all us as works under him, and seein' as 'ow we hav' th' Colonel for our manager, and Mr. Harewood for yet another, we've taken it into our heads that you could well spare Mr. Treherne to us. And if so be as 'ow you're of our opinion, it would give us the greatest honour and satisfaction if Mr. Treherne would be the Captain of us, his faithful miners? It's ordinary, we know, for miners to have one of 'emselves for their Captain; but we are all agreed in this"—looking round at his supporters, and rousing a chorus of "Ay! ay!"—"that it's the solemnest truth that we couldn't trust our own souls, or any o' our mates more than Mr. Treherne. Hoping there's no offence, then, we ask Mr. Treherne to be Captain of all th' men who work in the Broadbent mine; and we place our interests in his hands with the greatest confidence. Ain't it so, mates?"

"Ay! ay!" came from one and all as they pressed eagerly round.

Treherne flushed, and was so taken aback that he scarcely knew what to say, he was so touched by this proof of the miners' confidence; but he did not quite understand what his position would be with regard to them: if he accepted the post they offered him.

"I'm infinitely obliged to you," he said, with a cordial smile, "and I never was so flattered in my life; but this sort of thing must not be settled in a hurry, lest either side have cause to repent at leisure. The arrangement might not suit the Colonel's convenience," laying his hand upon Gordon's shoulder, "and I need scarcely tell you that I would not stir an inch in any matter connected with the mine without his full consent and approval."

"You have my full consent and approval," said the Colonel, heartily, "where another man in his position might have felt inclined to be jealous of the preference shown to his partner. But I quite agree that there are some preliminaries to be talked over before anything is finally settled. If Mr. Treherne were your Captain, would you undertake to obey his orders just the same as if he were still your manager?"

"In-course, Colonel," said Hewitt, gravely, "we'd take his orders just the same. Only, suppose an argument went wrong between us an'



you, Colonel, there could be no mistake about the matter, for we should have Mr. Treherne for our spokesman, and he would put it so plain before you that you'd know at once if he was right or you."

"Then I should have to stand up for your rights as well as the Colonel's?" said Treherne, with a smile.

"Surely the Colonel could do that much for his self," with a sly glance at Gordon's face, which he tried to keep as grave as possible in order to suit the solemn occasion.

"I warn you that nothing would ever induce me to go against him."

"And who in the whole of Broadbent wishes to go against the Colonel? Have no fear, Mr. Treherne, it ain't the like of that we speak of you. All we want is to have a man to fight for us, who has a fealty heart and a strong will, and ain't afraid of nothing, and that's your ain self, Mr. Treherne. There ain't a child in the road but knows it, must speak the truth if you but give him a look, and there ain't a man in the mine but feels he could trust you like his brother."

"You are too kind. Too awfully good!" said Treherne, looking quite overcome. "Well, my men, I accept your offer with pride, and only hope you may never have cause to repent it."

"We'll run a chance of that small," replied Hewitt, his broad mouth nearly stretching from ear to ear, with the amplitude of his smile, and then he took his cap off and swung it round over his head, calling for three cheers for "our Captain."

The deep, bass notes of the men as they obeyed the call with enthusiasm, were shrilly echoed by the women and children, who, save no reason why they should be mute on an occasion which concerned so universal a favour, it as Mr. Treherne.

There was great jubilation in the different adits of the mine when the news spread that Mr. Treherne had consented to call himself Captain of the Broadbent miners. Anything that is talked of by a few hundreds of people, is sure to get into the papers, and a leading article appeared in the *Stanpoole Herald* on the pleasant feeling that existed between the owners of the Broadbent mine and the men that worked under them. The latter had just given a striking proof of their esteem and affection for the junior partner by inviting him to be their Captain. It was well known that this post was generally filled by one of their own number, but Mr. Treherne had so won their hearts, that they could not be content unless he consented to be their head. It was a post of great responsibility, and it was evident that Mr. Treherne would fill it admirably, etc., etc.

Sir Thomas read the paragraph with an approving frown.

"What a ridiculous fuss they make about the fellow," he remarked in his usually querulous tone.

"I'll let him run to the end of his tether before I pull him up short. But I shan't let him escape—no fear."

"Thomas, why have you changed so completely to Mr. Treherne?" Cyrilla asked earnestly as she leaned on the back of his chair in a close-fitting violet velvet in which she looked wonderfully lovely. "You used to be so fond of him, and blame me for disliking him."

"You know as well as I do," turning round to face her with flashing eyes. "My friendship was real, your dislike a miserable sham. If I had died that night, you would have been in his arms by this. But by Heaven, I'll stop that little game. If he were you after I am dead and out of the way, it shall be in a coat covered with the broad arrow of the convict's prison, and the convict's shaven head. Tangible proof is all that I am waiting for, and Smith has promised that I shan't wait much longer."

"Oh what delusion have you got into your brain!" cried Cyrilla, clasping her hands.

"It is no delusion, woman—and you know

it," said Sir Thomas sternly. "You want to treat me as a drivelling idiot—you want to play a game of double-dealing that I should never have given you credit for—you wanted me to die, that you might bring your plot to a climax as soon as I was safely in the grave; but I see through it all, and I'm not going to die just yet."

"Thomas! don't you know that I nursed you as tenderly and lovingly as any wife could?" She asked with white cheeks and tears standing in her lovely eyes.

"Oh, you nursed me well enough, and so did he. But I won't have either of you near me when I'm really on my death-bed. I'll have no crocodile tears then, no shame, no horrid pretences. You will hate me, of course, when he's in his prison—but I'm driven to it by your deceit, and—"

"It's false—false!" she cried with crimson cheeks. "You know that no woman was ever more true to her husband than I to you."

"I will see to the future at all events," he said with a surly nod.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### "MY OWN LOVE LOVE!"

FROM Sir Thomas's manner Cyrilla was certain that Treherne's identity with Ralph Trevanion had been discovered, and every day that passed increased her uneasiness.

She felt as if she were in constant expectation of an earthquake, which had been foretold by some one who was certain to know. Any day the walls might begin to rock and her home be wrecked.

With these melancholy anticipations engrossing her mind, it was difficult to keep up an air of quiet cheerfulness. Indeed, it was easier to feign reckless high spirits than to go on tranquilly with a calm smile.

Val Donaldson watched her with growing curiosity, and being a man of some penetration, was not at all deceived by her bursts of wild gaiety.

He began to think that her husband ill-treated her in private; or else to fear that she was a little cracked.

One day he was driving her through the village, when she asked him to stop at the post. She went into the post office to ask for a postal order, and was in the act of paying for it, when a sailor came in and required a penny stamp.

He took off his hat and placed it on the counter whilst he rummaged in the depths of his pockets for the necessary copper.

Cyrilla was gathering up her change, when a three-penny bit rolled just behind the man's hat. The sailor caught it up with an apology, and placed it on his head, and as he did so she saw that the name of "The White Star" was printed on the ribbon.

In an instant it flashed across her that he had been brought over to identify Ralph Trevanion, and she hurried out of the shop as if she had seen a ghost.

"Good gracious, what's the matter?" exclaimed Val, staring at her with unusually wide open eyes. "Don't you feel well? Are you going to faint?"

"No, of course not; but—but," hesitating, "would you mind driving over to Broadbent, and taking a message for me to Colonel Gordon?" lowering her voice as the sailor came out, and went with a rolling step up the village.

"Not at all; but why shouldn't you come too? The drive would do you good?"

"No, I should like a walk best," talking slowly as she scribbled a few words on a card. "I will just go down to the shore, and you can drive round that way, and pick me up by the three firs."

He knew that something was up, and wondered what it was, as she went back into the post-office to get an envelope.

Evidently she was afraid to let anybody read whatever was on the card except the

future recipient; and he drove off with the feeling that the mystery was thickening.

Cyrilla walked down to the shore with a brisk step, for she was anxious to get away from the villagers, and afraid of meeting Mr. Verreker.

When she had gained the point which derived its name from the three firs, which adorned its crest, she sat down in a little nook where a rock sheltered her from the wind, and she had the whole expanse of sea before her, now sparkling like an ocean of diamonds in the sun.

It was a relief to be alone, without having to think for one moment whether she looked so unhappy as to attract attention.

For herself she wanted no pity, although Sir Thomas's temper had become abominable of late, and she had a morbid horror of her name being connected with Ronald Treherne's in spite of all she had suffered in order to prevent it.

Therefore she struggled to seem as merry as a wild school-girl, and laughed at all Val Donaldson's attempts at wit as readily as a child. But now she was alone with no one to count her sighs or to spy out the tear which was hanging on her long lashes.

It seemed as if it were dozens and dozens of years since she had sat looking out on those very same waves, and wondering when they would bring back her lover.

How changed she was since then, and how changed the sea! She used to love to watch it, even in its wrath; but now the mere sight of it raised such bitter longings in her breast that she had forsaken that once favourite seat of hers on the Knoll at Mountsorrel.

She was roused from her reverie by a Newfoundland dog which came scampering along the beach, and when he reached her began to jump round her in wild delight, barking joyously whilst attempting to lick her face.

"Oh, Ponto! my darling!" she cried, impulsively, as he knocked her hat off. "Come here and let me kiss you!"

She put her arms round his neck, her fair face down on his black curly hair.

"You good, brave dog. You saved your master. You should wear a collar of gold; you should!"

And the dog seemed to understand and appreciate her praises, as he rubbed his nose against her white neck, and constrained himself to keep quite still except for a little wag at the end of his tail.

"You dear old fellow, take care of your master; watch over him, Ponto! for I can't, except in secret. He doesn't know that I'm as true as Ponto, for I have to hide it," she went on, thankful to disburden her heart, though only to a dog.

"Cyril!"

She started to her feet, the crimson blood rushing to her cheeks, her pretty lips parted, her large eyes startled, and wide open.

There was Ronald Treherne, close beside her with a look of exquisite tenderness on his handsome face as he stretched out his hands and drew her trembling ones into his firm grasp.

Further pretence was useless, she had betrayed herself; and there was no going back to the old concealment.

"You've known me all this while?" he said, hoarsely, for a lump seemed to be sticking in the centre of his throat, and it was more easy to speak with his eyes than his tongue.

"Yes, from the very first!" her eyes drooping, her breast heaving.

"How good! how brave, you've been!" he went on wonderingly, as he thought how often she had offended him by her coldness, and disappointed him by her apparent dislike.

"I was almost afraid that I had betrayed myself that night at the Castle."

"And you thought I didn't know you even when we danced to that dear old waltz together?" giving one swift glance up into his face.

"Ah, if I had known it!" with a long drawn breath, which was more eloquent than tor-

sents of words. Oh, who can guess the exquisite relief of speaking frankly face to face after those months of cold reserve!

Two hearts were beating wildly, and every pulse was throbbing with a joy that was closely allied to pain; and yet each knew that they would have to go back and take up their old parts again as if nothing had happened.

Inexorable duty demanded that this blissful content should be but for a few short minutes. They sat down side by side, and talked over everything, forgetting the passing time—for getting everything indeed in the pleasure of those mutual confidences.

Some bell in the distance roused Cyrilla at last from her dream, and she stood up in dismay, as she pulled out her watch.

"Half-past one!" she exclaimed in astonishment, "and that wicked Val was to have met me long ago."

"I've often met that cousin of yours at the Castle," said Treherne, rising slowly, as if unwilling to put an end to their enjoyment.

"He seems a good sort of fellow."

"He is," said Cyrilla, heartily. "A dear, good boy, but don't let us talk of him. Do you know that a sailor from the *White Star* is in Stanpoole now?"

"Yes, I know it. I suppose he is Sir Thomas's tramp-card—and it will soon be played. Now, tell me the truth, Cyril, speaking very slowly. "Shall I fly, or shall I stay and face it out? I place myself in your hands."

"Say," she said, resolutely. "I would rather they called you anything but a coward."

"Don't think of me. They may call me a murderer, a coward, anything they like! But you, Cyril. They will drag your name into the court, they will tell the old story of our love."

"And if they do!" lifting her head, proudly. "Is there anything to be ashamed of? No, Ralph, never stoop to concealment again. It has been so maddening," drawing her breath quickly. "Face it out, and let us know the worst."

In that moment he guessed, for the first time, how much she had suffered, and his heart swelled within his breast.

"I could face anything for myself," he said, quietly, as he took up a stone and dashed it into the sea, sending up a shower of spray in the face of a sunbeam. "I'm the most unfortunate beggar under the sun. Why can't I die? I tried my best the other day."

"Oh, don't!" cried Cyrilla, with a shiver. "If you talk like that I shall never sleep again."

"Would you care?" broke from him involuntarily; but the moment the words had escaped him he would have called them back if he could, for she hid her face in her hands.

He knew that she loved him still, and his heart leapt in his breast; but honour sealed his lips, as she shrank a little further off, and a deep silence fell on them both.

"Good-bye," she said, faintly.

"Won't you shake hands for the last time?" looking down into her face beseechingly. He saw a quiver pass over it as she held out her small white hand, but she said nothing as he took it in his and raised it to his lips. "Good-bye, my own lost love!" and then he stepped back and watched her slowly ascending the hill, standing bareheaded in the cold wind until she was hidden from sight behind some bushes.

Then he called to Ponto, who was following her, barking loudly, picked up his gun, which he had thrown down on the grass when he first caught sight of her, and retraced his steps up the cliff.

Yes, he would stay and fight it out, and whatever his fate he could bear it better than this state of uncertainty.

He would fight it out, oh! so gladly, and brave the Baronet to do his worst.

Let the charge come as soon as possible, he was ready and willing to meet it. Cyril loved him. Cyril knew him—and in spite of all he felt as if he trod on air!

Meanwhile, Lady Dacre's surprise had been great to find her cousin waiting for her still at the top of the hill.

"Why didn't you call me?" she said, hurriedly, as she took her place beside him.

"I hope I haven't kept you waiting?"

"Only for an hour and a half," he said, coolly, as he sent the ponies off at a brisk pace.

"Oh, Val! I never knew you were here. Why didn't you call me?"

"I saw you were so pleasantly engaged that I wouldn't have interrupted you for the world," casting a mischievous glance at her out of his sleepy eyes.

She blushed to the curls on her forehead, and was obliged to drop her handkerchief in order to have an excuse for stooping.

"I was having a very serious conversation with an old friend."

"Now I understand why Mr. Treherne does not come to Mountsorrow, and why Mountsorrow is not invited to this fête at the mine."

"What fête? I haven't heard a word about it," she asked, eagerly, anxious to change the subject.

"Didn't he tell you about it? How very unkind! You know, the men are so fond of him that they've made him their Captain, and they are to have a grand supper to celebrate the occasion with fireworks, and all that sort of thing."

"How very nice of Colonel Gordon!"

"Yes; but it happens to be Treherne who does it all. The Castle's going, and so am I. Poor thing! you are out of it. Shall I ask him for a card?"

"No, sir. I wouldn't go for anything. How cold it would be! Even the sight of dear little Hilda Romer couldn't keep me warm."

"Wasn't it cold work sitting down there for an hour and a half?" he asked, maliciously.

"I wasn't there for an hour and a half," she said, indignantly; "and there was no wind at all. But do please hurry on Sir Thomas will wonder what has become of us."

"He would wonder still more if he knew, I fancy," said Val, with a smile; but the next moment he looked very grave.

He could not understand the position at all, unless his cousin was a very different sort of girl to what he fancied her.

It seemed so horribly like a clandestine meeting between her and Treherne on the shore, he could fancy that she had a message from him at the post-office which would account for her sudden change of plans.

He himself was evidently sent out of the way to Broadland in order that she might go to the Three Firs alone; and yet her hazel eyes looked so frank and true, and she herself seemed as pure a daughter of Eve as had ever bloomed into beauty on God's earth!

No, hang it all! he couldn't believe evil of her if he tried!

There was some mystery about the man which he could not fathom; but the world would come to an end before Lady Dacre would stoop from her high estate to make a guilty assignation with a handsome adventurer!

"Trust me, Val, and don't tell," she whispered as he helped her out at her own door.

And he answered her with a nod and a smile.

(To be continued.)

WHAT becomes of old shoes? The *Shoe and Leather Reporter* tells us that vast quantities are taken to mills, where they are ground into fine dust. To this is added about 40 per cent. of india-rubber, and the whole is then subjected to a pressure of 6,000 to 10,000 pounds per square foot. The substance is then coloured, and sold at prices some 50 per cent. below that of natural leather. It is manifestly a poor substance, and it is wholly wanting in fibre.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience should be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints which, if properly applied, might remove the cause.

To jam yourself against your father's back, kick him black and blue from withers to hock, crowd him out of bed twice or thrice during the night, and to lie habitually across the middle of the bed, is the "sound sleep" of boyhood.

THE wedding anniversaries are as follows: First year, cotton wedding; second year, paper wedding; third year, leather wedding; fifth year, wooden wedding; seventh year, woollen wedding; tenth year, tin wedding; twelfth year, silk and five linen wedding; fifteenth year, crystal wedding; twentieth year, china wedding; twenty-fifth year, silver wedding; thirtieth year, pearl wedding; fortieth year, ruby wedding; fiftieth year, golden wedding; seventy-fifth year, diamond wedding.

I was recently sitting in Mark Twain's

home in Hartford, says a writer in the *New York Graphic*, waiting for the humorist to return from his daily walk. Suddenly sounds of devotional singing came in through the open window from the direction of the outer conservatory. The singing was low, yet the sad tremor in the voice seemed to give it special carrying power. "You have quite a devotional domestic," I said to a member of the family who came in shortly afterward.

"That is not a domestic who is singing," was the answer. "Step to this window, look in the conservatory and see for yourself." I did so. There, sitting alone on one of the rustic benches in the flower house, was a small, elderly lady. Kneeling time with the first finger of her right hand, as if with a baton, she was slightly swaying her frail body as she sang, softly yet sweetly, Charles Wesley's hymn, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," and Sarah Flower Adams' "Nearer, My God, to Thee." But the singer was not a domestic. It was Harriet Beecher Stowe! There sat the once brilliant authoress like a child crooning a favourite air.

AN EMPEROR'S STUDENT DAYS.—During his school career, the German Emperor was a model of the studious German youth. He took his place as a common pupil in the public school at Cassel, and studied and played with the other scholars. At the final examination he was, indeed, only tenth in the list; but then he was two years younger than his mates, and was rightly considered to have done so well that his tutor was immediately knighted. There is no cramming system in Germany; he passed without aid or favour. At the University of Bonn I have sat on the same benches with him, and seen him with his little notebook writing down like a hard-worked reporter nearly all the professor uttered in his lectures on the great German authors, or on the genius of Shakespeare. The Prince was also anxious to study subjects not just then in the curriculum, and for these the professor attended at his own apartments. By the professors the Prince was treated with an almost servile adulation, and he won their esteem and love. He had them all in turn to dinner at his rooms in a villa which overhung the Rhine, with the honeysuckle, oleaster, and Virginia creepers, reaching over and down the garden walls almost to the water's edge. The Queen sent him out from England a splendid boat costing nearly two hundred pounds, but he used it very little, and it generally lay moored by the bank below his garden, idly rocking in the ripple of the Rhine. But he took part heartily in all the amusements common among German students, namely, beer-drinking, duelling, torchlight processions, carriage driving, bathing, and, in winter, sledging. I do not think he ever fought a real duel, but he mingled freely with the duellers, and in knelpen—drinking bouts—and torchlight serenades, sipping and sitting with the sippers of light German beer till late into the night.



## THE SECRET WHICH PARTED THEM.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

THERE was a cabinet photo of Lady Constance lying upon the table, and by chance the eyes of the young man rested on it, and he recognized the face at once and raised it eagerly.

"Who is this?" he queried with interest.

"My mistress. Is she not beautiful?"

"Oh! what shall I do, if anything has happened to her," and she wrung her hands together distractedly.

"If she forgot the time, and remained round the point when the tide turned, she has no chance of escape.

"That is the first place the sea comes up, but before she could get round the coast to the steps, the other promontory beyond would be impassable.

"There is no hope for her, young and lovely as she is she will meet her fate to-night. My poor dear Lady Constance." And tears rolled down the face of the speaker.

"She may meet her fate to-night, my good soul, as you say," he murmured, a strange light kindling in his eyes, "but it will not be death—or if so, then two will enter eternity together, she shall not go alone."

"I—I do not understand," said the woman brokenly.

"Do you mean that you will help her sir, and if so, how do you propose to do it?"

"I will save her; have no fear, only come with me, and show me the quickest method of getting there."

Almost before he had spoken, the other had opened the French window down to the lawn, and was leading the way through the sweet scented flowers to a gate beyond, which led on to the beach, and sped along so quickly that he had some difficulty in overtaking her.

"You lose no time," he said with a smile.

"No! every moment is an hour to her. Fancy what her feelings must be to find herself alone, with the tide creeping up around her, and the knowledge that there is no escape, none whatever, and the dark coming on, too," and she shivered.

It was a terrible picture which Lady Constance's servant drew, and a sensation of horror passed over the young man's mind, followed by a sudden revulsion of feeling.

He thought how glad Constance would be to see him. What a relief it would be to her to find help at hand.

He felt quite exultant that it would be his help.

How glad he was that a chain of events had led him to this out of the way part of the world.

It seemed as though it had been entirely to save Lady Constance from a watery grave.

Surely fate was thus drawing them together. His warm Southern blood leapt in his veins at the thought, and nerved him to the undertaking.

To some powerful swimmers there would have been but little effort in the matter, but Leoni was not an expert in the art. Still, he believed he should manage it, and hope led him on.

Had Mrs. Martin not been so much agitated, she would have told him that the tide beat around that point with great violence, but she was feverishly anxious to start him to the rescue.

"Round there, sir," she said hurriedly, "Think what she must be feeling at this very moment."

At that moment Lady Constance was not suffering at all. She was not even aware of her danger.

The last red streak was dying in the West, the sun had dropped like a ball of fire behind a dense purple cloud, and she was completing her sketch from memory, with no thought

beyond her desire to render it life-like and true to nature.

Her whole mind was concentrated upon her task, with no remembrance even of her troubles or of the rising of the tide, even though she had heard a weird tale from the fishermen's wives, of a pair of happy lovers who had been too much absorbed in their own happiness to notice the sea, until too late. All that remained for them to do was to cheer one another to the end, which apparently they did, for death did not unloose their clasp, they were found when the water went down, by the fishermen at daybreak, still locked in one another's arms.

Spurred on by the housekeeper, Leoni dashed off his coat and his boots, and plunged into the sea.

It was a long time since he had attempted to swim, and he made but slow progress. Still he struck out manfully, using all his strength to battle against the tide which was rushing in with great force.

Had he been accustomed to the water he would have swam out beyond the current, and escaped its violence, it would have been both quicker and more safe, but he was attempting to cut round the jagged point, which even to an expert swimmer would have been full of risk.

And so he soon found.

He had a hard struggle to reach the point, then came the attempt to pass round it.

A great wave caught him, carried him upon its surface almost lost to view amid a cascade of foam and spray, and dashed him with ruthless fury against its hard and rugged surface, although mercifully for him he had passed by the sharpest part, to be flung against which would have been killing work; but it was quite bad enough as it was, and every bone in his body felt shaken.

Mrs. Martin, standing upon the shore, uttered a piercing scream as she saw what she deemed his coming fate, and the fishermen's wives and children came crowding out of the cottages to the shore—a group of excited sympathizers.

And all stood gazing at Leoni and his futile efforts to get beyond the danger which promised to end all hope of rescue for Lady Constance.

As the women learnt her peril too, the tide of feeling became more intense.

They were already attached to her, for she had been kind to them, and they expressed their sorrow freely by words, tears, and gesticulations.

One, more practical than the rest, said but little, but that little was to the point.

She made a speaking trumpet of her hands and shouted to Leoni over and over again to strike out to sea, and having passed the rocks to let the tide carry him in, and not to exhaust himself by such efforts as he was making.

Her words reached him, not all at once, but little by little, as she patiently continued them, calling loudly, distinctly, and in no feminine voice to him, with her sound, sensible advice.

That woman probably saved the life of Leoni Angelo, and of Lady Constance, too.

He comprehended her at length, and struck out to sea, thus escaping the danger which had threatened to overwhelm him.

That cry of Lady Constance's working housekeeper did not only arouse the fishermen's wives.

It disturbed her ladyship also, even as she was absorbed in putting the last touches to her sketch.

It came to her dimly, feebly, faintly, but certainly, carried by the evening breeze.

She started and turned suddenly, with her brush in her hand, and gazing anxiously around, became aware of her own terrible situation.

She looked to right of her—she looked to left of her, behind, and in front of her.

Rough and rugged rocks on three sides, and the fourth sea.

Brave woman though she was, her heart

for the moment failed her, and she felt sick and faint as she recognised the fact that a lingering death was before her, and that she was alone—quite alone.

She stood very still, regarding the quiet and peaceful scene, with only the somewhat angry wash of the advancing waves to disturb her. She sank upon her camp stool at length.

The strength seemed to have left her limbs. The picture, which had been so full of interest only a few minutes before, seemed now so worthless and useless a thing to lose her life for.

She covered her face with her hands to try and shut out the world, and to think of death, and the life to come.

But the warm, young blood would not be stagnated.

At twenty Lady Constance had more sympathy with life than death by far, with joy than with sorrow.

And instead of the grim scythe-bearer her husband filled her thoughts—the man she had chosen from out the world as her mate, who she had loved with a loyal love, ay, and loved still; from whom she had been so cruelly parted by the demon of mistrust and jealousy, which had taken possession of him with no just cause whatever.

She drew a pencil from her pocket, and writing upon a piece of paper a few words of farewell, and of assurance of her innocence, and the sad news of her approaching end, she enclosed it in the bottle which she had brought with fresh water for her painting.

Having addressed it to her husband, to the care of his solicitors, and corked it firmly, she committed it to the ocean in the bare hope that it might be found, and that he would learn from her dying assurance that she was innocent.

She felt calmer after she had done that.

If only Clement could know that she had loved him to the end, she thought that she could die happier.

Anyway, die she must. There was no escape for her, unless the fishing boats should return before the tide was up.

How fast it seemed to rise—more rapidly than she had ever known it do before, or so it appeared to her excited imagination—and how much more land the waves covered as they rolled monotonously in, one after another, than she had ever noticed that they did before.

She fell into a dreamy state.

Her thoughts passed to Stella and Viscount Venwood, and a prayer for their happiness was formed by her brain, although no words passed her lips, but for the most part her senses were benumbed and dreamy.

It was such a strange, unexpected, and awful thing which was about to happen to her.

Living, moving, thinking now, with all her pulses beating full and strong, it was an awesome thought that in one short hour the land on which she stood would be immersed, and she, a thing of life, no more, but just a pale, mindless body, cast hither and thither at the pleasure of the ocean—a weird and solemn sort of flotsam and jetsam to be found by the fishermen at daybreak.

She thought of it with a dull pity for her own fate, knowing that there was nothing she could do to help herself.

If she screamed there was the bare possibility that she might be heard, but she hardly thought so, for the wind was blowing the other way, or she could not have heard that cry beyond the rocky point.

And if those few poor women knew that she was there, it was too late for them to render her assistance, for she had heard of the current at that spot, and how dangerous it was to try and pass there.

She knew well that every man and boat was out at sea.

Her eyes sought the horizon.

Not a sail was now in sight.

Those Leoni had seen had passed away

from view, and had left the sea in dreamy vapour.

No; she gave herself up to the inevitable. There was no hope—none whatever.

Stay! What was that?

A sound came to her.

Her sweet face was turned towards it. She listened intently.

The women were round the rocky head.

The murmur of human voices came to her—a faint murmur, breaking the painful silence which was straining her nerves to a scarcely bearable pitch.

Something louder—she could not tell what. It was the practical woman shouting her advice to Leonie.

Suddenly the eyes of Lady Constance fell upon some object in the water among the white foam.

It was black.

She thought it must be a dog, and that the fisherman's wives must have sent her some message by the faithful creature.

There was a retriever—a resident in that cluster of cottages—who was a friend to all, although he only owned one master.

Perhaps they had made him understand her danger; but if so, what could the poor fellow do?

Nothing—absolutely nothing, and she knew it.

Still, she longed for the arrival of the dog. Even his sympathy and companionship would, she felt, be acceptable in the dark hour which had closed in upon her.

But—merciful Heavens! the dog had a human face!

Yes; she was sure of it.

She saw it as its owner was lifted on a rising wave, and she also saw him dashed against the rock with cruel violence.

Then he was drawn back by the tide, and, she thought, sucked under.

But not! He was borne upon its crest again—the dark head in the white froth and foam—only to be washed back to the rock.

Lady Constance grew paler and paler.

She thought his last moment had come.

A hysterical sob arose in her throat. Her blue eyes grew fixed and strained with horror.

One more wash of the wave, and she felt that all would be over in this world for the brave fellow who was risking his life for hers.

She could not see the end!

She raised both her hands and covered her eyes with a sudden and distracted movement, while a prayer for his soul rang from her pure lips to the Presence of the All-Merciful—and who can doubt that it was heard?

#### CHAPTER XIV.

THAT voice again!

Trembling, with such fear for that other, unknown, and a stranger though he was, which she had never felt for herself, she drew down her hands and looked once more.

Instead of the lifeless corpse which she expected to see drifting aimlessly about, the dark head was struggling out to sea. He was evidently swimming.

A rush of gladness drove through her heart. The thought that a life was in danger from trying to save her, unmanned Lady Constance, if such an expression may be used in speaking of one of the gentler sex.

The dark head turned, the swimmer swam to the left, then turned again, and flinging himself upon his back to rest, followed the advice of the woman, and let the tide carry him to the shore.

Lady Constance watched his advance with feverish anxiety.

It seemed so strange to feel hope once more surging in her mind.

To know that she would at any rate not die alone, that human help and human sympathy were at hand. And a sensation of curiosity

as to who the brave fellow could be who was thus coming to her assistance took possession of her. When he reached the shore, feeble and exhausted, it was her soft hand which helped him out of the water, and its touch filled him with new life.

She recognized him at once.

"Again you have been a friend to me," she said, with feeling, as he stood before her dripping, his breath coming with effort and labour, but a bright smile lighting up his face. "So, you have come to try and save me, and I fear you have had a rough time of it. They should have told you about the current at that corner."

"It was most thoughtless of them not to do so, and might have cost you your life. How glad I am that you are safe."

"And how thankful I shall be when I get you safe home," he returned cheerfully.

"I hope you have not suffered much here alone; is it not strange that we two should thus meet again? It must be the hand of fate, and I thank God that I came when I did. A few hours hence I might have been too late."

"Ah! indeed, too late to have helped me, and even as it is I feel that it is a shame that you should risk yourself for a perfect stranger."

"I cannot realize that you are that, Lady Constance, our pleasant journey made me feel as though I had found a friend in you, and I am thankful to be here with you in your hour of peril."

"You certainly have been a friend in need to me," she replied softly, "and I hope I never shall forget to be grateful. My life is not a valuable one, but I thank you for it; the prospect of death is scarcely ever really acceptable to I fancy."

"No, there is a latent fear of the uncertain future in every mind, who knows, when we have shuffled off this mortal coil what dreams may come, as Shakespeare has it, but we had better keep conversation until later. I hope we shall enjoy many a cosy chat in this beautiful bay, Lady Constance, but we must keep a better look out on the tide than you have done," he ended with a smile.

"Yes! truly. I am more than sorry about it. I forgot everything, I was so absorbed in my sketch."

"It has nearly cost you your life. I am going to ask you one favour, Lady Constance."

"I should be a churl if I could refuse you aught," she returned, with emotion. "I shall never forget what I owe you—"

She paused, not knowing his name.

"I am Leonie Angelo, the Italian artist, whose pictures have been spoken of in the Exhibition," he said, filling up the gap. "You may have read or heard of them."

"I have, indeed," she answered, with warmth.

"Then there is a bond of union and sympathy between us. We are both artists."

"I am so in a very humble way."

"Humble, with a picture in the Academy?" he laughed.

"Ah! but I do not wish to identify myself with that, except when it will gain me orders."

"I see. That was why you did not give your name quite correctly."

"It was," she acknowledged, "but they were at cross purposes."

She had merely sent in her true name without her title, while he imagined Vivian to be an assumed name, and believed her still to be Lady Constance Calithness.

"Well, my prayer is that you will never set up your easel again in a place of danger, unless some second person is with you to remind you of the flight of time. You see, I might not be here at just the right moment again, and—"

He broke off suddenly.

"I cannot bear to think of your danger," he said, holding her hand in both his own.

"I cannot endure to see a lady suffer, yet it is my misfortune to see you do so. I left you in pain and meet you again in a worse plight. Is your uncle quite well, Lady Constance?"

"Quite; and now you look cold. How I

wish I had some brandy to offer you. But stay—if you do not mind it, I have what will take the same effect upon you—some *eau de cologne*," and she produced a pretty ruby scent bottle from her pocket, and continued,—

"It is horribly nasty, I admit, but it will revive you."

"Then I will take it by all means. I am only waiting to recover a little before starting for your home," and raising the bottle to his lips he drank the scent at her bidding.

"I am afraid you must have been much hurt coming," she said, compassionately. "Oh, I shall never forget seeing you dashed against that rock. I thought you would certainly have been killed."

"And would you have grieved for me?" he asked, with a tremble in his voice.

"You need not inquire. When you were coming to save me I should have felt that I had killed you. I am so thankful it is no worse. It looked as though there was no hope with all these jagged points about."

"Fortunately for me I had passed them, and it was against a flat portion of rock which I was so bumped! I admit it was not pleasant, but still I am thankful to be here to tell the tale. Will you give me the promise I ask for?"

"Certainly. You have the right to the favour," she answered, brightly, "since but for you I could never have hoped to paint another picture."

"Ah! that sketch! I am going to ask to have that thrown into the bargain," he said.

"The sketch? Gladly would I, but the sea will take possession of that."

"Not if I can help it. If it does not it shall have a chance," and he walked to the easel.

"Not an artist?" he murmured. "Why, this sea piece is exquisite! See! the tints and vapour float over the canvas. One could catch the rays from that setting sun, and see through the translucent water. This is a treasure! How high will the tide rise?"

Lady Constance shewed him, and he smiled.

He laid the easel against one of the rocks, and having mounted to the top of it scrambled to a ledge beyond, and having done that he made a further ascent to a crack, into which he slid the picture, and looked down at her with a smile.

"Neither sun nor wind, tide nor rain can reach that," he said, and let himself down as he had come.

"And now your *eau de Cologne*" has revived me wonderfully, are you ready to make a start?"

"Quite, but I am so sorry to have to give you so much trouble," she murmured regretfully.

"Trouble!" he repeated, "it does not seem that to me."

"And suppose you cannot manage it?" she asked.

"We should die together, for myself I should have no keen regret. It is better to leave this world happily, than to exist in it miserably, and so far I have little to live for. I am alone now that I have lost my mother. You dear Lady Constance, would not be more off than if I had not come to you, and I am thankful to have met you again. I have thought of you so very often since I saw you last. But have no fear, I shall save you. I cannot boast that I am a good swimmer, but with such an object in view I have no idea of failure, only do not trammel my arms. I have only to look into your face to feel sure you are brave, be calm also, and all will be well."

"Cannot you hold on to this leather belt around my waist? It is strong, and will support you."

"I will give you as little trouble as possible," she said, gently, as they walked into the water side by side.

"Remember," she continued, as she clasped his hand, "that if you find you cannot save both yourself and me, you must let me go."



"Never!" he exclaimed, fervently, and took his first stroke out to sea, this time keeping well away from the headland where he had so nearly lost his life.

He was a feeble swimmer, and was far more hurt than he pretended to be, but he struggled manfully on, and Lady Constance kept her promise, helping him all she could in the task before him, not hindering his efforts by one foolish act, and at last the watchers saw them coming.

A hearty cheer rang out from the women on the beach, and the little ones joined in it.

The lad who had driven Leonil from Llan-rooken had tied his pony to a tree and was there also now, ready to help, for a few words had explained all to him, and he and the practical woman waded out breast high into the sea to assist Leonil whose strength was so visibly ebbing away that they feared he might find those last few strokes impossible to him and that he might yet sink with his precious burden.

Saved!

Lady Constance was once again on "terra firma," and Leonil was there too; but for a time each one in that little group feared for his life.

Mrs. Martin fortunately appeared on the scene at this juncture with bread, and urged her young mistress to take some.

She put her mouth to the glass and did as she was requested, then with one of her taper fingers she wetted Leonil's blue lips and pressed the reviving spirit between them, rubbing the rest upon his brow, behind his ears, and into the palms of his hands.

But finding that he did not stir, she entreated them to carry him to her house, which their ready arms soon did, and it was not long before Leonil was in bed, wrapped in hot blankets, and smiling up into the faces of the kind nurses who were bending anxiously over him, Lady Constance Vivian, and her working housekeeper, Mrs. Martin.

## CHAPTER XV.

"Come! that's better," said Mrs. Martin, "if I didn't think you had given us the slip a few minutes ago, but now you have taken a turn, you'll be all right. I have warmed some broth for you; it will do you more good than a stimulant. I will run to the kitchen and fetch it. To-morrow you will be quite yourself again."

Leonil smiled faintly. He did not contradict her, but he knew better, and it was a good many to-morrows before he was able to move.

The lad, after being fed and dried, had driven to Llanrooken to order the doctor to go over and see Leonil, and the medico was in daily attendance at the house for some time. Leonil Angelo had received internal injuries when dashed against the rock; and it was just a question whether medical skill could save him or not.

The doctor, upon hearing the story commended his courage and endurance in glowing terms, saying how great a wonder it was that he carried the rescue of Lady Constance through, suffering as he must have done.

But Leonil would receive no praise. The pleasure had been above the pain, he said, and as he moved about his room waiting upon him, and watching by him, his eyes followed her as those of a faithful patient, dog might do.

Her smile made up to him for any suffering.

Strange to say Leonil had never noticed Lady Constance's wedding ring.

It was an especially slender one, that being a fancy of Colonel Vivian's, and the diamond hoop which she wore next to it, well-nigh hid it, being too large for her finger, and pressed down by a gipsy band which had also been given her by her husband, "to keep the other on," as he had laughingly remarked about the

engagement hoop. And all this time Leonil was learning to love her more and more.

It was scarcely likely that she would name Colonel Vivian to him, seeing that he had deserted her, and moreover Lady Constance never dreamed that her visitor knew her real position in life and society.

The doctor forbade him to talk, one of the lungs being severely crushed, so she generally read to him, or sat silent.

Lady Constance was a perfect reader. Her enunciation was worthy of an actress, her voice low and soft, as the cooing of a dove.

Those hours were very happy ones to Leonil Angelo, just the very happiest ones of his life.

Often as his gentle nurse ministered to him, he longed to clasp the white hands and cover them with passionate kisses, but there was something which held him back, something in her, notwithstanding all her care and kindness, all her gratitude and friendliness, which kept his love in check, and unspoken.

In the hours of his convalescence he told her how he had longed to find her and renew their acquaintance, and how her picture in the Academy had brought him to her at the critical time when he had not known that "C. Vivian" and she was one and the same person.

And he laid bare to her what he knew of his own history, begging her to help him to fill up the links of the chain of evidence, and to assist him to establish the fact of his mother's marriage, that he might be accepted as the heir of his kinsman, with a fixed position in society.

This assured to him, he felt he might lay his love at the feet of Lady Constance as a suitable mate for her, although now, as an artist, almost dependant upon his brush for a living, he feared that she might not deem him so.

Lady Constance was listening with deep interest to his story, and she lifted her eyes to the sketch of Leonil's mother.

"How small the world is, after all," she said, "who could have believed that the son of my dear mother's much loved companion should live to repay her gentleness to her daughter, as you have done to me, Mr. Angelo."

"I was still young when my mother died, but I can well remember how her name ever made her sad. And over and over again she told me that Signorina Angelo was a very sweet woman, and had one of the finest characters she had ever met with, free from all taint of selfishness or of the world—unconventional, but innocent."

"You have word painted my mother truly," murmured Leonil with feeling, "how I wish you had known her, and I, Lady Catherine, who was so good to her; it would have been a real bond of union between us."

"Certainly, but we have plenty without. Our patients were sincere friends, and I owe you my life. We are scarcely likely to lose sight of one another, or to quarrel, do you think so, Mr. Angelo?"

"I think you are an angel," he replied fervently, "and that no man calling himself a man, could do aught but love and worship you, and thank you all which is true and noble in woman."

There was a tremor in his voice which might well have betrayed his secret to a less pre-occupied mind, but to that of Lady Constance, his words appeared to point to her husband and his conduct, not to Leonil.

"The best of men make mistakes," she replied with brightened colour, "and are led away by some unchecked fault, to be cruel and unkind; people should never judge too hastily upon any subject."

"That is sound wisdom," he returned smiling at her, "but no man in his senses would venture to judge you, Lady Constance."

"Ah! you do not know, but I thought perhaps you did; people seem to be conversant with so much, and to fill in the gaps where their knowledge fails."

She spoke sadly, and dreamily rather to

herself than to him, he thought, and he did not comprehend her words.

"If any one could think ill of you," he said warmly, "I ask but one thing, let me settle with them!"

She laughed a little nervously.

"I think I am a better man than you just now," she returned with a kindly smile.

"I could protect you even now," he answered "see I have not lost all power," and he raised a metal vase which stood upon the table and crushed it in his strong right hand.

"I have still the power to shield you," he continued exultantly. "Have I not?"

"There are some enemies," she murmured, "against whom one's dearest friends can raise neither hand nor voice; let us change the subject, Mr. Angelo. What has my poor vase done that you should spoil its beauty?"

"Ah! that was thoughtless, I hope you did not value it very much, I will fill its place for you with a true Roman one, which was fished out of the Tiber and has been in our family for ages, and for my sin I will have what I have injured made right again."

"There is no need," she replied, "the account between us is largely in your favour, but some day I live in hope that I may render you a real service in return."

"You know I would if I found it possible, do you not?"

"I believe you are as true as tried steel," he replied with warmth, "and some day I may yet ask more from you than you care to do, who knows!" he paused and looked at her.

Even then there was no comprehension of his real meaning, no echo to the ring of love in his words.

The kindly face was turned to him with interest.

"You may trust to my gratitude to respond to a large demand," she said, "and now I must tax my memory to see whether I can remember anything about your mother which will help you. What do you want to ascertain?"

"When she married, and whom," he replied eagerly. "I have heard it whispered that there was no marriage at all, and I have been told of three men who were all supposed to be her suitors."

"Have you?" she returned in surprise, "then you know more about it than I do."

"My mother spoke of one love, and a very miserable one it was, but she felt sure what it would nevertheless be the love of her life."

"Can you tell me which of the three it was?" he inquired with interest.

"Which three? I have told you I never knew of but one."

"The gentlemen were named Mr. Ringwood, Sir Roger Chatwynd, and Viscount Venwood."

Lady Constance started, and blushed deeply.

"I see you remember the names," said Leonil.

"Yes! I know Viscount Venwood, he is a friend of mine, but he is younger than yourself, and could never have known your mother."

"No, but the king never dies," struck in Leonil, "there was a Viscount Venwood before this one, he must have a father."

"Just so, but your own words prove that he is not your father. Tell me your mother has died lately, Viscount Venwood's sire is Lord Douglas, and his wife is the mother of all his children. She is still alive and comparatively young. It is useless to look there to help you out of the shadows, what became of the other two gentlemen you mentioned?"

"Sir Roger became a gambler, I hear. I do not fancy he was my mother's husband, she spoke of herself as a widow always. No, it must have been one of the other two. Mr. Ringwood died very young—and no, Lady Constance, Viscount Venwood cannot be either of the gentlemen you know, for if the report be true he shot himself, did you ever hear it mentioned in the family?"

"Never! How very shocking, why did he do so terrible a thing?"

"Ah! I know no more, and cannot answer



LEONI WAS A FEEDLE SWIMMER, BUT CONSTANCE HELPED HIM ALL SHE COULD!]

for the truth of even so much as that. Still, I feel sure that my mother *did* marry, and it is of utmost importance to me to find out whose wife she was, I want nothing of the family, nothing at all. If they were ashamed to own my mother, they certainly would not care to recognize me; yet for my own sake I must find out who and what I am. If you know the Venwoods you will not mind trying to ascertain for me whether any member of the family ever married a Miss Angelo, will you?"

Again that vivid flush overspread the sweet, proud face.

"Mr. Angelo," she said, "I have given up the world, and have become a sort of recluse. With the world I have given up my friends. There are urgent reasons why I do not wish any of my former acquaintances to know of my whereabouts. I am best and happiest alone, by far.

"Try your utmost to find out this secret for yourself.

"I have very strong reasons for not wishing to see the Douglas family; but if you cannot do without it, I owe you too much to say no to you, and I will do my best to find out from them what you desire to know."

There was a strange suppressed excitement in her manner which chained his attention.

His fine, dark eyes rested upon her with gentle enquiry.

He leaned forward and laid his hand upon her's.

There was a world of tenderness in his look and tone.

"Constance," he said, with energy, "is this Viscount Venwood the man who has made you sad? who has caused you to think my sex cruel and unkind, if so let me deal with him, I pray you to let me shield you—do listen to me Lady Constance."

"Hush!" she replied, growing very pale. "You do not know what you are saying, not in the least; no one can shield me from him who misjudges me. I entreat you not to pursue

the subject any further, it only gives me pain, I do not desire to meet the Viscount, but he has never said or done anything against me, believe me and I should be sorry you did him the injustice to think so," she added, with warmth.

Nearer her he bent, his face was full of a strange, wistful sorrow.

"You love him," he whispered, scarcely above his breath, "I see it!" and a deep, drawn sigh escaped his lips.

Lady Constance saw none of the signs of his distress, but his words angered her.

"If we are to be friends," she said, "you must keep such speeches to yourself. How could you venture to suggest such a thing? it is an insult.

"Viscount Venwood is no more to me than you are. You are both my friends in whom I am interested; but he is nothing more, and never will be, so do not let us mention his name again."

Leoni saw that his hostess was really annoyed.

Her words stung him.

She had told him that the Viscount was no more to her than *he was*, with scornful and angry accents.

He loved her with all his nature, and was he indeed less than nothing to her?

He dropped his head in sorrow and mental pain.

She little dreamed what was passing in his mind, but she saw that she had grieved him, and was sorry, for he had been very good to her, and had nearly given up his life for hers.

She felt vexed with herself that she had been betrayed by her wounded feelings into answering him as she had done.

She held out her hand to him with a smile.

"My friend," she said, "you will scarcely think a sweet temper among my virtues, but you will pardon my crossness, I did not mean to wound you, believe me."

He held her hand and looked at her with gratitude.

"Your words are like water to the desert traveller," he murmured, "Constance speak like that to me again and I will bless you," and he lifted the hand he held to his lips and kissed it.

(To be continued.)

LEARN to be a man of your word. One of the most disheartening of all things is to be associated in an undertaking with a person whose word is not to be depended upon, and there are plenty of them in this wide world, people whose promise is as slender as a spider's web. Let your given word be as a hempen cord, a chain of wrought steel, that will bear the heaviest sort of strain. It will go far in making a man of you; and a real man is the noblest work of God; not a lump of moist patty, moulded and shaped by the last influence met with that was calculated to make an impression, but a man of forceful, energised, self-reliant, and reliable character, a positive quality that can be calculated upon.

Mrs. SPURGEON, the wife of the noted Baptist preacher, is a confirmed invalid and has been for many years. Yet she is the founder of two important charities in London, the book fund and the pastors' aid fund. The book fund has been in operation thirteen years, but the other is new. In 1888 there were seven thousand nine hundred and thirteen volumes distributed among nine hundred and eighty-two pastors, without distinction of sect; sermons, tracts and periodicals were given out additionally. The pastors' aid fund was started because Mrs. Spurgeon in distributing books came in contact with such distressing poverty. She also openly avows her purpose to devote some of the fund to the helping of clergymen's wives and daughters to "pretty things" in the way of millinery and small "frivola."





["SIR LOCKE, BE PLEASED TO RELEASE PHYLLIS!" SAID A COOLD, CLEAR VOICE ABOVE US.]

# NOVELETTE.

## AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

### CHAPTER I.

SIR LOCKE and my Lady Lister were coming home after an absence of ten years, and our quiet village was all astir with excitement. Arches had been made from the station to the hall, flags waved and bells rang out merrily; everybody wore some little piece of new finery, and a nosegay of brilliant colours; as for me, I felt quite proud of the pretty lilac gown mother had bought me, and prouder still of my cherry ribbon, a present from Stephen Clarke, my sweetheart.

Mother and I stood at the parlour window, watching for the first glimpse of the carriage, whilst father leaned over the park gates talking to some old friends.

Time out of mind a Bolton had been lodge-keeper to the Lister's, and I think sometimes father grieved that he had no son to whom the office could fall. But he comforted himself by saying to mother, "Never mind, old woman, perhaps they'll give the place to Stephen, when we're gone; Phyllis could manage that! Goodness lass! how fine ye'd be with Stephen head-keeper and ye lodge-keeper. It would be easy to save money then."

I was only seventeen then, and when Stephen begged we should be married right off, father said,—

"Naw, now lad, let t' lass have some pleasure in her youth; she don't leave this here roof for two year to come. She's on'y a baby yet."

And though Stephen was eager and did his best to coax father to his way of thinking, he could not move him.

Now, as mother and I stood at the window, scarce daring to sit down, lest we should spoil our fine frocks, Stephen came across the park, and I ran out to meet him.

"You'll be late," I said, looking up at his handsome, grave face. "You ought to have joined the procession twenty minutes since."

"I know, Phyllis dear; but I'll make up for it soon. I couldn't go without a sight o' your face lass; how bright you look and what a colour you've got! Now give me a flower for my button hole, and I'll be off."

I gathered a great purple pansy and pinned it in his coat, standing on tip-toe to do it; then he stooped his tall head and kissed me as calmly, as though no one could see, and strode away through the big gates which father opened for him.

He could not have been away twenty minutes before we heard loud shouts and cheering.

"They're come, Phyllis," said mother, and ran outside I following. I was very proud of mother that day, she looked so pretty and comfortable in her plum-coloured gown, and neat cap; I thought then, and I think now, there was never such a loving, womanly woman as my mother.

Her rosy cheeks had grown a little pale with excitement, her soft dark eyes were all aglow. I put my arm about her saying,—

"How pretty you are, dear," and she laughed and blushed like any girl.

"They'll be here soon," she said the next moment. "I'm wondering Phyl, if my lady has changed. She was a rare, handsome, one, ten years ago, poor lady!" and she sighed sympathetically.

I said nothing, asked no questions, the story was not unknown to me; there were many gossips in Wentworth, and I had learned all there was to learn about Sir Locke and my lady, quite without my mother's assistance; when I had ventured to ask her any question about the lord of the manor she had always said it was not seemly to talk of our betters without respect.

Yet I knew that twelve years ago Sir Locke Lister had married a beautiful lady named Judith Vernon—folks said because she was

rich; she was only eighteen then, and had been engaged to Captain Grey Heatherleigh, who had a nice place five miles from Wentworth; but in some way the lovers were parted, and Mr. Vernon, who thought more of a title than his daughter's happiness, had married her to Sir Locke, whilst her poor heart was still sore with the belief that the Captain had been untrue.

People said she had been very proud and cold to the gentry, very good to the poor; and it was said too, that Sir Locke did not treat her well.

Then her baby came, and she grew happier, but trouble seemed to follow her. The baby died before it was nine months old; some said Sir Locke was not guileless of its death, that in a drunken freak he had tossed it high laughing loudly at its screams, and that at last, missing his catch, he had allowed the poor mite to fall to the ground.

Nothing was ever proved; my lady was silent, the doctor discreet, but from that day she was a changed woman, and shortly after she went abroad with her husband in search of health.

That was ten years ago, and I had no remembrance of my lady's face, nothing but a dreamy recollection of a beautiful woman, richly dressed, who had kissed me and cried a little over me. When I asked Stephen why she had remained so long from England, he answered:

"Because Sir Locke is a brute, he spent all her father's fortune, in less than two years, and then was obliged to go abroad, and live cheap; now, my lady has just come into some more money, so they've made for home. I guess none o' us will love the master too well."

I thought of all these things as I stood close to the lodge gates, and I felt such pity for Lady Lister that I was hardly conscious of the shouts which came nearer and nearer still, or the low rumble of carriage wheels until mother touched my arm, and said,—

"Lass, art dreaming? Look! here they

come!" and in a moment father had flung wide the gates, and, followed by a great crowd, the carriage entered.

Sir Locke was bowing and smiling in every direction; my lady scarcely smiled at all, but sat pale and weary beside him.

I thought I had never seen so beautiful a face as that which suddenly turned upon me. It was quite colourless, and very, very sad; but, in spite of its scorn and pride, it was lovely.

The great brown eyes looked out at us from under level brows, the beautiful mouth suddenly smiled. And, ah! what a smile that was!

She said something to Sir Locke, who instantly stopped the carriage, and bade me to approach.

I obeyed, trembling and feeling very awkward in my shyness.

My lady bent forward, and, looking earnestly down at me, said—

"Who are you, child? What is your name?"

"I am Phyllis Bolton, my lady; your lady's daughter."

"Stay at home to-morrow, Phyllis; I shall have something to say to you."

And then the carriage rolled by, leaving me wondering rather than sad; and I did not like the bold look Sir Locke had given me.

There was much feasting and merriment on the great feast given that night, and everyone was in the highest of spirits.

My lady was not visible; but just as it was growing dark Sir Locke came out and spoke a few words to me.

His voice was already husky, and his words muddled; and I heard old Simon, the gardener, say—

"He's at it again. I misdoubt but he'll make ducks and drakes o' my lady's money, as he did afore."

I thought a great deal of Lady Lister that night as I lay in my own little room, and wondered what she could possibly have to say to me—to me, little Phyllis Bolton, who at a distance already worshipped her for her beauty and her kindness.

At breakfast the next morning mother said—

"I'm wondering why my lady picked Phyllis out from all the rest, and what it is she wants of her. Phyl, my dear, don't let your head be turned by a great lady's notice."

"Now, mother," said my father, smiling down at me, "leave it child alone. O' course that ladyship has an eye for a bit o' prettiness; and 'praps she wants the child about her."

"She's a splendid woman, ain't she, Phyl? O' my goodness, what a partner and the Captain would be made!"

"Hush!" said mother, prudently, and spoke of other things.

But I went about the house all that morning like one in a dream; and when my work was finished mother sent me to put on a clean cotton gown, because she said there was no telling when my lady would come.

And sure enough I had hardly finished dressing when mother called me down; and I went trembling and blushing into our little parlour, where my lady was sitting.

She turned to me with a faint, sweet smile, which made her face more beautiful than ever, and spoke in a soft, low tone.

"So you are the little Phyllis I used to pet so long ago. I should not have known you again."

Come here and sit beside me. I want to talk to you."

And as I obeyed, she went on—

"I have been talking of you to your mother, and in return she has told me you are already engaged. I wish you all happiness, Phyllis."

"And I think Stephen Clarke a very worthy young man; but I am glad—yes, most glad—that you are not to be married for a long while yet."

I murmured something. I hardly knew what, and my lady listened with a smile.

Then she said gently—

"Phyllis, I have been telling your mother

that I want a maid. Just as we were on the point of crossing the Channel mine left me, and I have had no time to engage another.

Would you be willing to come to the Hall?"

"Oh, my lady!" I said, "I am so ignorant I know nothing of the duties. I—I should not please you at all."

"The duties are very light, Phyllis, and I would teach you them. I have a fancy, too, that you would grow attached to me. Won't you come?" with so much wistfulness that I longed to go with her at once; but mother answered for me.

"If Phyllis is willing, my lady, I have nothing to say against it, and she'd better go home; but I must ask her father and Stephen first; they're most concerned in her things."

"Yes, yes. And if they raise no objection, what then, Phyllis?"

"I will do as you wish, my lady, only I am so ignorant."

"We will soon remedy that, and I fancy you don't do yourself justice."

"She's a beautiful needlewoman," mother said, smiling over at me, and she's quick to learn, and though I wouldn't come to flatter her she's a good girl and a good temper."

My lady rose.

"I can easily believe that, Mrs. Bolton; and when am I to have my answer? Will you bring it to the Hall to-night? And, remember, if you doubt the Phyllis or mine she shall say you very readily."

Then she took up her mantle and went on. She watched her walking slowly across the park, a tall, beautiful figure in black dress, and mother's face was very painful as she said—

"Poor lady! It's easy to see she's miserable; and, oh! Phyl, what will your father say to this new plan?"

Father felt flattered for my sake, and said it would be a good thing for me, though he should miss me about the house; but, last, he added, "you'll learn summat up at the house, as you never could here; and, mebbe, it'll stand you in good stead one o' these days."

I'm but a rough sort o' man, and your mother, God bless her, is like a lady a side o' me. You learn to be like her Phyl!"

Stephen was harder to move, but at last he gave in; but I saw he was not pleased for me to go and I was sorry.

My lady proved the most kind and patient mistress instructing me in all things, treating me with such tenderness—such goodness that I found it an easy thing to love her with all my heart.

She was anxious too to improve my poor stock of knowledge, and herself superintended my lessons.

I have learned since Stephen objected to this; he was afraid I should grow ashamed of him, as if I could! but mother was very proud; and father said—

"Let it be alone, Steve, it pleases her and her ladyship, no harm'll come o' it."

I had been five days at the Hall before I encountered Sir Locke. I met him then on the stairs, and made way for him to pass. But he stopped, and looking oddly at me, turned my face toward him.

"Well, Phyllis," he said, "have you nothing to say to me; what a pretty little witch you've grown."

"Can my word I must snatch one kiss from that rascal's mouth!"

"Sir Locke!" I cried, dismayed and ashamed; when suddenly a clear, cold voice from above, said, "Sir Locke, be pleased to release Phyllis. She is not here for your amusement."

Instantly his swaggering air dropped from him, and he went downstairs quickly, while I ran up to join my mistress.

She did not speak until we were safe in her room, and then she laid her two hands on my

shoulders and looked into my eyes so sadly, oh! so despairingly, that I cried out—

"Oh, my dear lady! oh, my dear lady!" and could scarcely help crying.

"Phyllis," she said, at last, "do not tell any one of this, or you will be taken from me. I promise Sir Locke shall not repeat his offence, and you—you care for me a little!"

I lifted one white hand in mine (I wonder now at my boldness), and kissed it.

"I will stay dear mistress, so long as you need me," I said, and her lovely eyes were full of tears as she thanked me.

That afternoon some ladies called her, and I waited upon them in her boudoir. She seemed to like me about her always then, and I wondered how she could seem so calm and quiet when I knew how much she had suffered and was suffering.

"We shall be going," said one lady, a new comer in our party. "I understand Captain Heathcote is coming home next week, he has returned."

I glanced towards my lady; she was a little paler than usual, and I thought her lips trembled a moment; but presently she said—

"He will be quite an addition to our circle. Is he yet married?"

"No; he is a young bachelor. I have heard he had a disappointment years ago," and then a messenger took from another guest made her stop short in confusion, but my lady was equal to the occasion. "Heatherleigh Court is too beautiful to be without a mistress," she said, and so dismissed the subject.

There were many times when I did not understand my mistress, sometimes even when I was a little child after. She would sit for hours with her chin resting in her hollowed palm, her great dark eyes staring moodily before her, her lips set in a hard line. I used to wonder then of what she was thinking, and wish I could comfort her if ever so little.

It was not a happy house. In a short while I learned Sir Locke was a confirmed drunkard and gambler, and sometimes I heard high words between him and my lady.

He was always in the wrong, and she had suffered so long she could no more be patient or forgiving—once in my presence he swore at her. I never shall forget then how she looked—how she spoke the one word "silence!"

She rose from her seat, and moved towards him, a beautiful figure in shining raiment and glittering jewels; but her face was white, and her eyes burned with a sudden dreadful fire.

"Silence," she said again, "you must not go too far," and she shrank back ever so little from her. "I will bear no further insults."

"Don't put on your confounded tragedy airs Judith," he muttered coarsely, "why don't you make yourself agreeable?"

"Agreeable!" and she laughed, but her laugh was sad to hear.

"What inducement or reward do you hold out to me? Some woman, under my wrongs would have gone mad, some would have risen against you," then remembering me, she broke off suddenly and by a gesture dismissed him.

Then she sank into a chair and laughed again, and all my heart ached for her; but she was so strong, so proud, and in a moment called me to do her hair in that pretty way I had lately learned. That night she died out, and I watched her go thinking in all the land there was no lady to compare with mine.

She was splendidly dressed in wine-coloured plush, with diamonds about her throat and wrists, in the heavy masses of her taven hair, and any man but Sir Locke must have been proud of her.

Contrary to her wish, I sat up that night for her. I was not weary, and it was my pleasure to minister to her in all things. I was reading a book she had lent me and the time passed so quickly that I was surprised when I heard carriage wheels along the drive.

I went hastily out upon the landing, and then I saw a tall, beautiful figure running up the stairs, and my lady's face was so white and wild that my heart almost stood still. I

## CHAPTER II.

In a week my duties were easy to me. My lady proved the most kind and patient mistress instructing me in all things, treating me with such tenderness—such goodness that I found it an easy thing to love her with all my heart.

She was anxious too to improve my poor stock of knowledge, and herself superintended my lessons.

I have learned since Stephen objected to this; he was afraid I should grow ashamed of him, as if I could! but mother was very proud; and father said—

"Let it be alone, Steve, it pleases her and her ladyship, no harm'll come o' it."

I had been five days at the Hall before I encountered Sir Locke. I met him then on the stairs, and made way for him to pass. But he stopped, and looking oddly at me, turned my face toward him.

"Well, Phyllis," he said, "have you nothing to say to me; what a pretty little witch you've grown."

"Can my word I must snatch one kiss from that rascal's mouth!"

"Sir Locke!" I cried, dismayed and ashamed; when suddenly a clear, cold voice from above, said, "Sir Locke, be pleased to release Phyllis. She is not here for your amusement."

Instantly his swaggering air dropped from him, and he went downstairs quickly, while I ran up to join my mistress.

She did not speak until we were safe in her room, and then she laid her two hands on my

shoulders and looked into my eyes so sadly, oh! so despairingly, that I cried out—

"Oh, my dear lady! oh, my dear lady!" and could scarcely help crying.

"Phyllis," she said, at last, "do not tell any one of this, or you will be taken from me. I promise Sir Locke shall not repeat his offence, and you—you care for me a little!"

I lifted one white hand in mine (I wonder now at my boldness), and kissed it.

"I will stay dear mistress, so long as you need me," I said, and her lovely eyes were full of tears as she thanked me.

That afternoon some ladies called her, and I waited upon them in her boudoir. She seemed to like me about her always then, and I wondered how she could seem so calm and quiet when I knew how much she had suffered and was suffering.

"We shall be going," said one lady, a new comer in our party. "I understand Captain Heathcote is coming home next week, he has returned."

I glanced towards my lady; she was a little paler than usual, and I thought her lips trembled a moment; but presently she said—

"He will be quite an addition to our circle. Is he yet married?"

"No; he is a young bachelor. I have heard he had a disappointment years ago," and then a messenger took from another guest made her stop short in confusion, but my lady was equal to the occasion. "Heatherleigh Court is too beautiful to be without a mistress," she said, and so dismissed the subject.

There were many times when I did not understand my mistress, sometimes even when I was a little child after. She would sit for hours with her chin resting in her hollowed palm, her great dark eyes staring moodily before her, her lips set in a hard line. I used to wonder then of what she was thinking, and wish I could comfort her if ever so little.

It was not a happy house. In a short while I learned Sir Locke was a confirmed drunkard and gambler, and sometimes I heard high words between him and my lady.

He was always in the wrong, and she had suffered so long she could no more be patient or forgiving—once in my presence he swore at her. I never shall forget then how she looked—how she spoke the one word "silence!"

She rose from her seat, and moved towards him, a beautiful figure in shining raiment and glittering jewels; but her face was white, and her eyes burned with a sudden dreadful fire.

"Silence," she said again, "you must not go too far," and she shrank back ever so little from her. "I will bear no further insults."

"Don't put on your confounded tragedy airs Judith," he muttered coarsely, "why don't you make yourself agreeable?"

"Agreeable!" and she laughed, but her laugh was sad to hear.

"What inducement or reward do you hold out to me? Some woman, under my wrongs would have gone mad, some would have risen against you," then remembering me, she broke off suddenly and by a gesture dismissed him.

Then she sank into a chair and laughed again, and all my heart ached for her; but she was so strong, so proud, and in a moment called me to do her hair in that pretty way I had lately learned. That night she died out, and I watched her go thinking in all the land there was no lady to compare with mine.

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wanted to meet her, but she thrust me aside roughly, and without a word entered her room, locking the door upon me.

Some terrible trouble had befallen her, I thought, and I could not leave her utterly alone, so I crouched on the mat outside her door, waiting for her to call me. All night long I stayed, but the summons never came, and through all those heavy hours, I heard her pacing to and fro, and moaning in her pain. At break of day I stole to my own room, to ponder what all this could mean; later, much later, I learned that she had been brought face to face with her first and last love, and that although no word had passed between them, the sight of him, the memory of the past had proved too much even for my dear mistress.

In the morning she was her ordinary self, although her face was a shade paler, her eyes gloomier than I had ever seen them. She said in answer to all inquiries that "her head ached, and the best remedy for it was a long brisk walk," then bade me dress, and go with her.

I was very proud to be her chosen companion, and as we passed, the Lodge gave mother a triumphant look; so we passed out of the park on to the high road, and from thence to the woods.

My lady talked wisely and kindly even, I thought, with some affection for me in her voice, and I longed to tell her how I worshipped and loved her.

We gathered quite a handful of wild flowers, and my mistress tied them together with a wisp of grass, turning to me with a faint smile to say she had not felt so young for many days, when I suddenly saw her face grow rigid, and her eyes glanced round as though seeking some way of escape; and I started when, at a little distance, I saw Captain Heatherleigh standing amongst the trees, as white as my lady herself.

No meeting could have been more unlooked for, less desired; but the Captain quickly recovered himself and came towards us with outstretched hand.

"Judith—Lady Lister! this is an unexpected—"

"Not pleasure," she interrupted, half wildly. "Do not mock me, Captain Heatherleigh," and when I would have gone she held me fast, as though she feared to be alone with him and her own sad heart.

"I wish you welcome home," he said, ignoring her words. "Perhaps English air will be good for you. You are not looking well."

"I am never ill; Phyllis here can answer for me. I am quite vulgarly strong," and I had never heard her speak so quickly.

"You have not forgotten your favorite spurs?" he said, with a glance at her flowers. "Do you remember—I beg your pardon—old memories are always foolish?" But, Judith, will you give me those?" lightly touching her nose.

Just a moment she held them towards him, whilst her breath came hard and fast, then she dashed them to the ground and trampled them under her feet.

"No," she said, half fiercely, "no, you have no right to ask so much," and suddenly turned from him, dragging me with her.

When we had gone a little way I looked back and saw him standing there, the poor, bruised flowers in his hand, his face, stricken with pain and despair, bowed over them.

"Oh, my lady! oh, my lady!" I cried, breathless with the hurry we made, but she did not seem to hear me; her breath came in great gasps, and her beautiful eyes stared unseeing before her. But all in a minute she turned to me.

"Phyllis," she said in a whisper, "Phyllis, you have read something of my past—of my wretched, wretched story. Be true to me. Look it away in your own breast. Oh, child! oh, child! keep faith with your lover. Be very careful not to heed evil tales people may tell you of him—"

I lifted her hand and kissed it, crying bitterly over her woe.

After that my lady often met Captain Heatherleigh in company, and I always knew when she had seen him, because she would come home white and weary, and sit for hours with her hands clasped about her knees, her eyes heavy with tears she would not shed.

She was a very proud and a very strong woman, or she could not have lived the life she did, with all its care and shame; for was it not shame to her, that all the county, high and low, spoke of Sir Locke's dreadful habits and vices; that his drunken orgies were known to one and all?

And sometimes he would force an entrance to her rooms and abuse her in language such as I had never before heard.

As such times I have seen her stand with her head reared high, her proud, beautiful face, so white and set, bent full upon him, and her lips closed tightly, as though she feared to speak the thoughts that were in her heart.

Oh! my mistress! oh! my mistress! what wonder your great soul failed you at last!

One day Sir Locke told her Captain Heatherleigh had accepted an informal invite to dinner, and in company with three other gentlemen, would present himself at seven o'clock that evening.

He looked at her insolently as he spoke, but she never winced, the expression of her face never changed, and she seemed annoyed by this. He was savagely bent on routing some show of feeling in her.

"Will it not seem strange Judith," he said with a brutal laugh to entertain both lever and husband at your own board?" "Pon my soul, I can't congratulate you on your first choice. Grey Heatherleigh is as good as a scarecrow, and looks fifty—do you think it is because of your summary rejection of him?"

"We are not alone," she answered icily, but he laughed again.

"Oh, where's the use of keeping peace before Phyllis; she has known the story long enough, never fear. Your affection for the gallant captain was too pronounced to be easily forgotten; and isn't it strange he should only return home after society knew you were settled at Wentworth?"

If possible, my lady's face grew a shade paler, but she answered steadily.

"Do not go too far Sir Locke, my patience is nearly exhausted," and pointed to the door. Even he saw it was better to leave her then, and swung out of the room noisily; then my lady walked to a window, and stood there with hands fast locked, and I heard her say under her breath, "Heaven help me, heaven teach me to remember I am his wife."

### CHAPTER III.

I REMEMBER that night very distinctly; my mistress seemed careless of her dress, and chose a robe of black velvet, with white lace about the throat and elbows. It made her look paler, but it could not spoil her wonderful beauty; and when I had dressed her dark hair, and fastened the diamond pins, I thought she was perfect. But she looked at herself in the mirror with a little bitter smile and said, "a study in black and white! I am quite funereal."

Then she went down, and I sat sewing in my lady's chamber, just above the drawing-room; it was a lovely night and all the windows were flung open, so that I could hear the voices of Sir Locke and his friends as they played billiards and grumbled that "Heatherleigh" was late. My lady walked to and fro on the terrace, her head a little bent, her hands loosely clasped before her. Presently, I heard a quick step and the next moment I saw the captain hurrying towards her; she stood still, until he joined her, with the one word, "Judith," and she answered

wearily and sorrowfully, "Why have you come?"

"I would not, for a king's ransom, spy upon my mistress, and I left my seat hurriedly; when at last I resumed it the guests had gone in to dinner, and I sewed on, sick at heart for those two poor souls."

After awhile I knew the gentlemen were sitting over their wine, because their voices grew louder and rougher; and presently I heard my lady playing soft snatches of music. I let my work fall on my lap and listened until the tears came to my eyes—it was so sad, so sweet; the burden of my lady's woe seemed breathing through the music, and I who loved her so well was unable to help or comfort her.

She played on and on, until the twilight fell, and must have cast heavy shadows in the drawing-room; then suddenly her music ceased, and I heard Sir Locke asking roughly what she meant by sitting like an owl in the dark.

Her answer was so low it did not reach me, but I trembled for her. Sir Locke's voice told too truly how heavily he had been drinking, but for awhile there seemed no reason for my fear, no sound but the murmur of voices reached me, and I was beginning to feel secure when Sir Locke said, loudly,—

"Judith, you will drive over to Shawley's to-morrow, he has a fine collicie I want you to see."

My lady's answer did not reach me, but I felt sure she would refuse to obey. "Mr. Shawley, although one of the guests, bore a terrible character in the county; no lady recognised him abroad, and the Hall was the only house open to him. So I was not surprised when Sir Locke shouted,—

"What, you won't go! Why madam? Am I not master there? Shawley, you may expect my lady at twelve precisely."

"Do nothing of the kind, sir," my mistress broke in, "I yet have some remnant of pride, some respect for the name you would have me drag in the dirt, as you are doing."

"What! you insult my friend, and in my house?"

"It would be impossible to insult Mr. Shawley; say rather his presence here is an outrage upon me."

Then he called her by a name so foul, so terrible that the men cried out shame upon him; there was the sound of a sharp scuffle, a woman's cry and then I saw Sir Locke and Captain Heatherleigh out upon the terrace, wrestling each with the other, and I held my breath for very fear.

It was vain that the other gentlemen tried to part them, and a moment my mistress stood silent watching them, as though it went against her will to leave Sir Locke his just punishment—then she ran forward crying,—

"For my sake, for my sake and this most unseemly struggle."

"Stand back my lady," the captain said, sternly, "this is my quarrel," and with a sudden great effort he hurled Sir Locke to the ground. He was up in a moment, mad with drink and anger, and the struggle would have begun again, only my dear mistress threw herself between them.

"Strike," she said, in a strange, hard voice, "and let your blows fall on me. I can bear them more easily than the scandal that must come of this affair."

Captain Heatherleigh fell back.

"I will obey you this once; but it is against my will," and turning on his heel he walked slowly away, never remembering he was hatless.

Sir Locke raved and stormed, but my lady never answered a word, only she begged the guests to go, to leave her husband to her charge; and I think they were all too glad to obey—certain it is, not one lingered behind to give her that protection she so surely needed.

Then, although I believe it was cruel as death to her, to give Sir Locke any assistance, she made him lean upon her arm, and led

him back to the drawing-room, he cursing and swearing at her the whole while.

She made no answer for a long time, and I shivering in the lonely room, feared she had fainted; but at last, when the storm of dreadful abuse grew more violent each moment, and I felt I must rush to my lady's help, she spoke.

"Silence!" she said in a terrible voice. "How dare you so address me? so degrade me. Let me pass. I will hear no more."

"Where are you going—to Grey Heatherleigh? Madam, do you think I'm blind to your love for the gallant captain? But, by Heaven, if you ever do dishonour to my name, I'll kill you?"

"That would be merciful compared with your present conduct," she said.

"Oh, no doubt I'm a brute, a villain! I can quite believe I don't escape 'soot free' when you entertain your prim and proper friends; but I would like to know if you can deny you still love that fellow?"

"I scorn to deny it!" she retorted, hotly.

"Once in my life it was given me to know a man worthy of all love, all honour. Like a fool I listened to evil tales of him; like a fool I allowed myself to be coerced into a wicked and bitter marriage. I have my reward. What love and what esteem do you suppose I can have for a drunkard, a profligate, for a man who systematically ill-treats his wife, subjects her to countless indignities and pains? Oh, Heaven! what have I done that I should be so sorely punished?"

"What have you done? Why, disappointed and scorned me—yes, me, madam," with drunken boastfulness, "Sir Locke Lister, the last of the Listers, with whom you were unworthy to mate! Woman, I hate you! I hate your proud ways and your pale face! It gives me the horrors! I wish I had let you go your own way, and marry that idiot Heatherleigh! I am sick to death of daily seeing you!"

"You have your remedy," she said, icily. "I should be glad to know we should never meet again; gladder still if I could cast aside that name you have made a disgrace to all who bear it!"

"You will have it, then, will you?" he said, hoarsely, and I screamed aloud as I heard the fall of a heavy blow, and ran downstairs, meeting the butler half-way.

"Where are you going," he asked. "Stop, Phyllis! there'll be murder done in this house yet; but you can do no good."

I scarcely heard him. I know I never answered; all my heart was full of my dear mistress, all my soul was wild with fear for her.

I rushed into the drawing-room. My dear lady was standing in the full light, her head thrown back, her eyes flashing fire, her face as white as snow, save where the fall of brutal fingers had left a scarlet mark.

Sir Locke, a little sobered by her expression, looked at her with drunken fear; but when I entered he lurched towards me, saying with an oath,—

"It's pretty Phyllis! And, Phyllis, my dear, we've had—a jolly row."

"Stand back!" I cried. "Do not touch me!" (I fancy he was not nearly so tipsy as he would have us believe.) "Oh, my lady! oh, my dear lady! come away!" But she neither heard nor moved.

I clung to her weeping, but her face never lost its fixed and stony look.

"Mistress! mistress!" I sobbed. "Come with me; you are ill—unhappy."

That last word stirred her ever so little.

"Unhappy, yes," and she offered no resistance when I attempted to draw her away.

We went slowly upstairs together, my arm about her waist, for I thought she would fall. And when we came into her own room she walked steadily up to the mirror, and smiled a graceful smile when she saw the print of his fingers still upon her cheek.

As for me, I sobbed aloud, and she turned, still with the strange look in her eyes.

"Why do you cry, Phyllis? I have no tears—I, the wounded one. Come nearer, child, and see what tokens of my lord's affection I bear with me."

She lifted her sleeve as she spoke, and showed the fair arm all bruised and discoloured.

"His doing," she remarked, with a short laugh. "But I am wrong to trouble you. Go to bed, child, and forget there is such sorrow as mine in the world."

"As if I could! Oh, my lady! my lady! let me stay with you. I will not speak unless you wish it; I will only watch over and pray for you. Do not send me away, I beg you."

So I pleaded, and her beautiful face softened as she listened.

"Stay if you wish it," she said, very gently. "You are a good child, and I think you love me."

Then she moved to a window, and sinking down on her knees, looked out desperately on the beautiful, quiet world.

Very, very slowly the hours wore by, and the room was so quiet I could hear the beating of my own heart.

My lady's face had fallen on her arms, and I wondered if she slept—I hoped so.

All through the weary night I prayed Heaven to be good to her, to comfort that proud, sad heart, to strengthen her to bear her lot.

The pale stars faded one by one out of the brightening sky, a faint breeze of morning rustled the leaves about the window, and wafted the scent of the roses towards me, and one or two birds began to twitter under the eaves.

My mistress lifted her head, and without glancing round, said,—

"Have you slept, Phyllis, at all?"

I answered no, and she was full of concern now.

"Go to your room, child; you are too young to bear a long night watch easily."

"I am not tired, my lady," I said, quickly, "let me stay with you until the morning comes."

"It is already breaking. See how the sky is changing. And you need have no fear for me now, I am strong again;" but her dear voice faltered, and her face worked convulsively. I went to her then. "Let me get you something, my lady, you are faint!"

But with a dreadful sob she crouched at my feet, crying,—

"Pray for me! pray for me! that I may be kept pure. Oh, child! oh, child, what a night I have spent! What terrible temptations have assailed me. There was murder in my heart when I came to this room; but thank Heaven, my anger is spent, but my heart is like lead in my bosom. I am alone—alone—alone!"

Oh, what woe there was in her wailing cry. I sank on my knees beside her, and my love made me bold to speak.

"Never alone dear lady while I live. I am a poor ignorant girl, but I love you as well as though I were a lady born. Oh, mistress, take me, and use me as you will. My joy will be to serve you!"

And then she put her arms about my neck, and kissed me once upon the mouth, saying,—

"Heaven has given me a blessing in you!"

#### CHAPTER IV.

THE next day my mistress could not walk abroad, for her face was disfigured by bruises, so she and I wandered about the park and the little wood beyond.

Sir Locke had gone to London, and for this one day at least we had peace in the house. Never by word or look did my lady refer to the cruel events of last night, and I was so wishful to turn her thoughts to happier things that I chattered like a magpie of everything under the sun.

And she listened with her own gracious

smile, and a far away look in her deep eyes, and did her best to seem interested.

I was growing very tired when she proposed going home, and I gladly turned to retrace my steps, when I saw Captain Heatherleigh coming towards us.

My lady drew her breath hard, and, not knowing what she did, gripped my arm fiercely. Her face had grown so much paler that the purple bruises showed the more plainly, and as the Captain's eyes fell upon them he started, grew as white as she, and a dangerous look came over his handsome face.

"He struck you, Judith!" he said, in a low, strange voice.

"It is nothing," she answered, swiftly, "please to forget it," and would have passed on but he stayed her. "Send your maid away I want to speak to you alone."

But she would not let me go. I think she was afraid her strength would fail her.

"No; Phyllis does not leave me; say what you have to say before her, she is not only trustworthy, but she loves me."

He looked vexed, but seeing how immovable she was made no further attempt to shake her decision, and I, feeling very awkward and uneasy fell a little behind my lady, and I tried vainly not to hear the words they spoke.

"Judith," the captain said, in such a wistful tone that my eyes filled with tears, "how much longer is this to go on?"

"What do you mean?" she asked, as though not understanding.

"Can you ask? How long are you going to submit to this man's brutality? To endure insults and ignominy. You have your remedy, any day you can obtain a separation."

"And of what use would that be? No, Captain Heatherleigh, I am too proud a woman to air my wrongs before the public, and even if we separated I should still bear his name, and remain his lawful wife."

"It is infamous that he should go unpunished," he cried, passionately, "Judith, for your own sake you must leave him or one day there will be murder done."

"I feel that—I know it; but I cannot go; and if he takes my life there will be nobody to care, and I shall be the happier, at least, I hope so."

"You have grown morbid; but surely, Judith, you should acquaint your friends with the state of affairs; they might do something to ameliorate your lot."

"Have you forgotten what manner of friends mine are, Grey?" bitterly. "In all the world I stand alone, but for this good and faithful girl," and, turning, she laid her hand affectionately upon my arm.

"Not alone so long as I live!" the Captain cried, reproachfully. "Judith, have I proved so unfaithful in the past, so forgetful of an old love that you should doubt me in the present?"

All her face changed and softened at his words, and she stretched out her hand to him.

"I wronged you, Grey—my friend, now and always—but the world will not permit you and I to have any intercourse."

"Why should we care for the world, being conscious of our own integrity? Let me see you daily, counsel and comfort you, protect you to the utmost of my power; Judith, say you agree!"

"No, no; do not you tempt me, Grey; the path I tread is rough and stony, do not make it perilous. But I thank you, oh, from my bruised and broken heart, I thank you for your goodness—your forgetfulness of my past distrust, and all the misery it has wrought. And now, good-bye!"

"Not yet; I have much to say. You will let me meet you sometimes to assure myself that you are well."

"No, no; oh, I cannot, I dare not! You do not understand how displeasing it would be to Sir Locke to know I sometimes exchanged words with the man he now is pleased to call his enemy."

"Why are you so obstinate? Why do you study him so greatly?"



"Because, Heaven help me! he is my husband. Good-bye, once again. Let me go, I have borne as much as I can bear."

He caught her hand and kissed it; then releasing her suddenly, almost violently, strode away, and my lady sinking down upon the ground covered her white face with her trembling hands, and I think for awhile she was praying. When she looked up again she was her old calm, proud self.

"Come, Phyllis!" she said, "Lancheon will be waiting," and without further speech, she led the way back to the Hall.

My mistress had been strong to resist Captain Heatherleigh's entreaties that morning, but I soon knew that her strength had given way; that meetings between them were not infrequent, that wherever she went her old lover laid her, and she had neither courage nor heart to send him away.

I believed then, and I believe now that there was no guile in their souls at that time, that no evil thoughts would have come to them had Sir Locke behaved with anything like decency towards my lady. But all the same I knew such meetings were dangerous, and that already people were beginning to talk lightly of my dear unhappy mistress.

But what could I do? I a poor, ignorant maid, had no power to stop their tongues, or spare her one pang. Even mother began to shake her head and say it would be better for me to leave the Hall and return home; and frightened by the thought of my lady's loneliness if I left her, I spoke to father; he was a very easy-going man at ordinary times, but could be stern and obstinate enough when he thought needful; and now he brought his great honest hand down on the table heavily, and said,—

"Let't lass aloan; who knows but she may oom 'twixt my leddy and temptation. Heaven knows her leddyship's tried sore snow, and no Bolton shall make her trouble bigger. Stay, where thou art, lass, and Heaven'll bless ye," and with that he kissed me. But mother said anxiously,—

"You've clean forgot Steve, father; surely he's got a right to say his say about Phyllis."

"And what does Steve say?" I asked, growing sick at heart.

"More'n he ought by a great sight," retorted father, "he's owre ready to think ill o' my leddy, and he wants ye to home. But even if you do oom, there ain't goin' to be no talk o' marriage yet. Can't ye stay and see him little Phyl."

"No, dear, I must be getting back; but I'm thinking Steve has said more than he means; anyhow I won't leave my lady just now—oh! you can't think what a cruel life she leads and how kind she is to all."

"It 'ud be a hard mistress who could be aught else to ye lass," father said lovingly, and putting on his hat walked with me across the park, kissing me before we parted.

I went up to my lady's boudoir with a heavy heart; it would be terrible to grieve or anger Stephen, and would make me very unhappy, and yet I felt my duty was to my lady then, that he could better spare me just now, than she could.

I was so quiet that evening that my mistress pressed me for a cause, but for a long while I was silent, afraid to say what was in my mind; but when she still urged me gently, I gathered my poor little stock of courage together, and said,—

"Oh, my lady, my lady! if only you would not meet Captain Heatherleigh!"

She blushed to the roots of her hair, and half turned from me, and her voice was all shaken and hoarse, as she said,—

"Who has told you I meet him? They might have left me your respect."

"Nothing can change that dear mistress; but people are cruel, and do not know you as I do! Oh, for your own sake, my lady, give them no cause to speak ill of you."

"And if they do, why should I care?" with bitter pride, but the next moment her mood changed, and sinking down on her knees

beside me she hid her face in my gown, and moaned a little as if in pain. Then she said, "Phyllis I have done wrong in seeing him, although indeed all the world might hear what has passed between us, and could not condemn us; but my name is my only treasure now, and you shall help me to guard it. To-day, I will not go out. Oh, Heaven! how hard it is to deny oneself the only gleam of sunshine in a dark life."

"I tried to thank her for her goodness in hearing me so patiently, in listening to the advice of one so ignorant as I; but I broke down, and shed foolish tears, and in an instant she had roused herself."

She took me in her arms and held me fast, whilst she kissed me gently on the mouth, and I felt her tears warm upon my cheeks.

The next day she did not leave the house, and no visitors came.

Ladies were chary of calling when Sir Locke was at home; but I saw that my mistress believed the slight was intended for her, and that she was doubly miserable.

Day after day passed, and still she remained a prisoner. I think she hoped to weary Captain Heatherleigh in his search for her.

And when a week had passed she sent me into the village for some ribbons for a new gown she had given me.

I think she fancied I should meet the Captain, and warn him of her intention to see him no more. If she did, she guessed rightly, for half-way to the shop I came upon him, looking very haggard and distressed.

"Phyllis," he said, eagerly, "where is your mistress? What has happened? Is she ill?"

"My lady is well," I answered; "but she has learned that the people are saying cruel and false things of her, and has determined not to see you any more, unless in company with Sir Locke."

His face went quite white, and his grey eyes flashed angrily.

"Who has dared to speak ill of her?" he asked, almost roughly. "By Heaven! this is too much! She is as far above this common herd as the sun above the earth, poor girl! poor girl!" and his voice grew tender again.

"Cannot she have one friend?"

"Captain Heatherleigh," I said, "no one knows my lady's goodness so well as I; but I know, too, where she is weak, and where danger waits for her. You loved her once, you love her now, and so you must not meet. It will be selfish to try and see her; and if you care for her unselfishly you will not do so."

He frowned upon me standing there.

"You are young to be so worldly-wise and so hard," he said.

"I am not too young to hold my lady's honour and happiness dear."

"And you think I would wreck the one and fail to make the other?"

"You have no right to talk to me in such a fashion, Captain Heatherleigh! My mistress, as Sir Locke's wife, should be sacred to you."

"And is she not? I would not harm a hair of her head! I only seek to save her from self-destruction—from misery."

"You will only destroy her if you thrust yourself upon her," I said, sadly. "Already the ladies hold aloof from her, and her name (Heaven knows how unjustly!) is on every lip. You are working her worse misery every day, and I cannot stand by and see it—I must speak!"

"What would you have me do?" he asked, bitterly. "Because of a censorious world is Lady Lister always to stand alone? Her friends will not help her, and daily she endures untold shame and humiliation. Any man would stretch out his hand to help her."

"Any man but yourself might do so. Oh, Captain Heatherleigh! be good to my lady. It is hard for you, I know, but harder still for her. She is only a woman—a woman sorely tried. You, if indeed you would help her, must do so by leaving her undisturbed."

He stood silent a moment, then he said,—

"Will you carry a note to her?" But I

shook my head; and he cried, angrily, "You are a good girl, and faithful; but you carry your prudence too far. Will you object to taking a message?"

"No; I will do that."

"Tell her, then, her wishes shall be obeyed. I will not seek her again unless she is in sore need of me."

## CHAPTER V.

A DAY or two after that meeting, as I sat sewing in a little ante-chamber, Stephen joined me. I fancied he looked displeased, but I made no remark on that, only questioned what brought him there at such an unusual time, and how he managed to find me.

"Oh," he said, "Jane brought me to the landing, and I have come to speak seriously to you. Phyllis how red you have grown! I believe you know what I am going to say; but first tell me where is her ladyship? and turning he closed the door."

"She is walking," I answered, a trifle angered by his manner.

"I'm glad to find you alone," and then he came and sat beside me, with his arm about my waist, but he seemed very ill at ease.

"Phyllis, there must be an end to this?" he said at last, and I questioned with dry lips. An end to what Stephen; speak out please.

"And so I will," almost roughly, "you must leave her ladyship's service, and go home. I won't allow you to stay here longer."

"Stay," I pleaded. "I do not think you understand."

"Oh! I understand too well! Lady Lister's name is in every one's mouth, and as you are as much her friend as her maid, your name will suffer too. It shall not be; you've got nothing else beside, and if your people haven't the sense to look after you, I must."

"I am in no danger of losing my good name," I said, speaking as gently as I could, "and Stephen, I cannot, I will not hear my lady spoken lightly of."

"Very well, you place her before me. Is that as it should be?"

"You know it is not so; but just now, when her life is so hard, when all her friends are deserting her, and temptation is all around and about her, I cannot, I dare not leave her, I am all she has."

"You forget Captain Heatherleigh; doubtless he will console her for your loss," Stephen sneered, now thoroughly angry.

"For shame!" I cried, oh Stephen, I did not believe you so hard. If you saw what I see daily, heard what I hear, your heart would bleed for our unhappy mistress. There is not a colder wife who suffers more abuse, is more frequently struck and sworn at, Oh, Stephen! Stephen say that it is your pleasure I shall stay with her still."

But his face had hardened.

"Choose between us," he said, "if she is first and dearest, I have nothing more to say; only remember if you refuse to please me in this thing, when I leave you, I am a free man. My wife must have no slur on her name."

"It rests with you whether our engagement is broken or not," I said, trying to speak steadily, and praying Heaven would keep me true to my mistress.

I felt then as certain that if I left her she would rush on self-destruction as I was certain I loved Stephen. It was hard to cross him, hard to oppose him so resolutely, but were it to be done again I would do it.

"Then I am to wish you good-bye? Well, lass, you've deceived me cruelly. You've chosen to stay on in the midst of riches, perhaps because I've little to offer you, and if evil comes of it, there's none to blame but yourself. But, I'll never forgive you, before Heaven I'll never forgive you for spoiling my life."

He stood looking at me, white and stern, and I crept a little nearer to him, feeling that my heart would break.

"Stephen," I pleaded, "Stephen, dear, be

just to me; and if we are to part, let us part as friends, not in anger!" but he held me away, frowning down at me. Then, all in a moment, I saw my lady standing in the doorway, very pale, with her deep eyes full of wonder.

"What does this mean?" she asked, in her slow, soft voice. "Phyllis, what has happened? Why are you crying, child?" but I could not answer, and she turned to Stephen. "You must tell me," and he said, almost bluntly,—

"We have quarrelled, your ladyship, and it's best we should part now, before it's too late."

At the want of respect in his voice she winced a moment, then said, quietly,—

"You are hardly yourself, Clarke, or you would not adopt such a tone to me. Is it out of my province to inquire the reason for your dispute? Phyllis is not quarrelsome."

"Well, my lady," said Stephen, sturdily; "we've been engaged nigh two years now, and it's high time we thought of marrying. I want her to give up service and go home."

"Even then you would be no nearer marriage. Mr. Bolton will not let Phyllis sacrifice her youth. You have another reason?"

He flushed; could not look at her for a moment, then he said,—

"I have another reason, my lady; and I think you know it."

"How should I?" with her coldest air. "Please enlighten me," and she sat down, with her hands loosely folded before her.

"My lady, you should not compel me to speak. You ought to have mercy on yourself. I—I do not think you are fitted—to—"

"Go on," and now her dark eyes were black as night.

"I—I think Phyllis would be better and safer at home."

"What is your reason for thinking so?"

"My lady," he said, indignantly, "you should not force me to say unpleasant things. You must know very well that people talk openly of you and Captain Heatherleigh."

She was white to the lips, but she gave no other sign of pain.

"And what do they call me?" she asked, in a low tone.

"If you will have it, my lady—a light woman."

She rose then to her full height.

"Go," she said. "This is too much. I have lived too long when one of my servants is bold enough to say such words to me. That being your opinion of me, Stephen Clarke, take this poor girl with you. The shadow of my shame shall not touch her," and she took my hand and strove to lead me to him; but I was angry with him, sick to the heart for her, and I clung to her, crying, I would not leave her.

"You silly child," she said, with a little sob. "On the one hand is happiness and home, on the other servitude and a possibility of reproach. Do not cry so. See, your lover is waiting for you—"

"She comes willingly or not at all," said Stephen; and then I knelt at my lady's feet, weeping.

I could not leave her lonely, praying her not to send me away, and I heard my sweet heart's voice saying,—

"You have decided—then good-bye, and may all your life be the darker for this one hour's cruelty."

"Stay," my lady said, coldly, "give her another chance; she is so young, so young—oh, Heaven, how cruel men are! Phyllis, my child, do not send your lover away, you will be sorry when it is too late."

"I can do no other thing," I said, "but if he would wish me good-bye kindly, I would be glad. If he will only be patient I will come to him yet."

"Will you come now?" he asked from the doorway.

"I cannot!"

And then I heard his footsteps echo down

the long corridors and the creaking stairs, but I did not cry then, all power to do so had left me, and I only felt a vague pity for myself.

I could hardly understand he was lost to me for ever, and for the first and last time in my life I was bitterly ashamed of and angry with him.

How dare he so insult my dear mistress? How could he stoop to think evil of her? And with her arms about me I tried to believe that my life would be happy; I hoped and prayed that I had not sinned in sending him from me, I had thought it impossible she could be gentler or kinder to me than before; but I was wrong, she now treated me more as a younger sister than a humble maid and slave by every means in her power to make me forget my sorrow.

I was not so weak as to show my grief to all who cared to see it. I think my lady's example had made me strong; but none the less in secret I brooded over my shattered hopes, and the joys I thought would never be mine now; and, although angry with Stephen, I vowed in my heart to love him as long as my life should last.

My dear father agreed I could act no other wise, and was very angry with Stephen, but for the first time in my life there was a cloud between mother and me, and I saw she held me in the wrong, and pitied Stephen.

I was hurt, but I could do no other than my duty, and in the dark days that followed I was glad to remember I had clung to my lady in and through all.

Sir Locke was much away at this time, and we heard Captain Heatherleigh was absent too, so that we were free to walk or drive where we would; but the ladies glanced so curiously at my lady when they chanced to meet her, exchanged such cruel looks, that she kept more than ever to the house, and in consequence grew paler and thinner.

One afternoon when I had gone down to see mother we were greatly surprised by the entrance of Sir Locke, who had come unexpectedly from London, and had walked the whole way from the station.

"You did not expect me back so soon, Mrs. Bolton," he said, airily, "and Phyllis, to what good fortune do I owe this meeting? How could her ladyship spare her favourite?"

"My lady had letters to write, and thought I would like to come home for an hour. She is always considerate."

"That is news; but now, pretty Phyllis, hurry away and prepare your mistress for my coming. I have business to discuss with Bolton, and shall not reach the Hall for another hour."

I was only too glad to do his bidding, and finding my lady in her boudoir, delivered Sir Locke's message.

She grew a little paler than before, and I thought she trembled, although she forced herself to smile.

"Come, Phyllis," she said, with a sort of forced gaiety, "I must make a becoming toilet, Sir Locke likes to see me bravely dressed."

And I saw she was bent upon meeting him in a kindly way, anxious to keep peace with him at any cost.

She chose a beautiful dress of apricot silk, trimmed with lace of a deeper shade, and I fastened rubies about her lovely throat and wrists, in the masses of her wonderful hair.

She looked all warmth and light, and she had even taught her sad mouth to smile when Sir Locke came through the hall.

"This is an unexpected pleasure," she said, gently, and extended her hand.

He laughed out, loudly,—

"What's the game, Judith? You aren't often so civil? But by Jove, you are looking first-rate; never saw you in better form. Who dines with us to-night?"

"We are alone? Do you not prefer it?"

still very gently,—

"Well, for once in my life I do; I've got something to say to you presently, my lady. Oh! don't look so startled, it is pleasant

news," and then they went away together, my dear mistress striving bravely to look and speak kindly to this man she loathed and feared.

The next hour or two passed quietly enough, and I hoped that Sir Locke had returned to his senses. I might as well have hoped one day to be a great lady.

Suddenly we were all startled by the sound of something falling, and an angry voice cursing and swearing. I started to my feet, but Jameson, the butler, held me back.

"You can do no good, Phyllis," he said, "stay here, my lady will take care of herself!"

I begged him to go to her, but he replied, that although he was devoted to one mistress, he did not think it wise to interfere, and having a mother dependent upon him, he could not risk losing his situation; so there I stayed, more frightened than I can tell, and still that coarse voice raged on, but never an answer from my lady could we hear.

At last the drawing-room door opened, and some one came out. A little later my mistress rang for me, and afraid of what I should see I went to her. She stood by an open window, in all her brave dress and fine jewels, and her cheeks were white as death, her eyes shone like fire, and every bit of softness had gone from face or form.

"Come here, Phyllis," she said, in a hard tone, "and give your counsel to a desperate woman; I am going away from here!"

## CHAPTER VI.

"Oh, my lady, no!—Where could you go?"

"I don't know! I don't know," wildly.

"Will you come with me?"

"Anywhere, everywhere; but, my lady, think, don't act so rashly that you may be sorry all your life."

She laid her hands upon my shoulders, and her eyes seemed to burn into mine.

"I shall go mad under such hardships as I daily bear; better to go while yet I am free of crime, while yet I have my reason. Hear what I can tell, Phyllis, and then say if it is not wiser to leave this terrible place at once and for ever."

She paused then, and I waited, patiently for her to speak again, and after a little while she went on,

"I could bear blows. I have borne them often, but such an indignity as he would put upon me now I will not bear. There is a woman, a dreadful woman of whom he is enamoured—so beautiful that she could outdo the pale—so beautiful that she could men's hearts and render their senses—and he insists I shall receive her and her train of friends and lovers on Tuesday next. Phyllis, she is young, but already has passed through a divorce court, and ruined more young men than I care to think about. Answer me, child, what is my duty?"

"It cannot be your duty to receive so dreadful a creature."

"Well, then, there is nothing to do but to go away. Are you afraid of poverty, Phyllis, for I shall be poor—the settlements were in his favour."

I hastened to assure her that rich or poor I would always be her faithful servant; her humble, loyal friend, if indeed I might claim so sweet a name.

But I prayed her to be patient, to give Sir Locke one more chance; and if he afterwards fully resolved not to receive his guests, he would surely not press the point.

For a long while she would not hear me, but at last she turned quickly and caught my hands; whilst she said,—

"Heaven sent you to me to save my soul; it shall be as you advise, Phyllis. But if he will not withdraw his invitations, on the day that Lady Clara Renwood enters this house I leave it for all time."

I was glad to win even this promise from



her, and when I saw how sweet and gracious she was to Sir Locke, in the days that followed I hoped for the best.

He was sulky and hard to please, but not violent as he generally was, and I know my lady thought he would yield to her, that he was ashamed to remember the insult he would have put upon her.

On the Monday I met Stephen; he had not spoken to me since that dreadful day on which we parted, but now he stopped and said, sternly,—

"Do you know what sort of visitors are expected at the Hall to-morrow?"

"I do not think they are expected, any longer," I answered, "and I cannot understand how you have learned anything of the affair."

"Oh! some of the servants are not so close as you," he said, crossly, "and they have talked about it in the village. You can't stop their tongues any more than you can stop my ears."

"You are not yourself, Stephen, or you would not speak in such a way to me. Please believe that Lady Kenwood is not coming."

"But I tell you she is; Blunsom has orders to meet the five o'clock train, and Sir Locke himself will take the dog cart."

"Then my lady has her remedy, she will know what to do."

"So then you intend to stay at that cursed place until your name is gone, and—"

"Don't go too far; my lady will take good care of me."

"I wish to Heaven I had never seen you!" he cried, violently. "You have spoiled my life, and destroyed my faith in all women. Oh! you should be well content Mistress Phyllis, you have much to answer for."

"Don't misjudge me, Stephen; when you are calm you will regret your words and your suspicions."

"Oh! I am calm enough, and—content enough. Never fear, you'll soon hear of me as a happy married man no doubt; I am only halting in my choice between two women."

"You are so unlike yourself," I said, sadly. "that I am afraid you have been drinking. But whatever you do, wherever you go, you have my prayers and my good wishes. Good-bye, Stephen," and I would stay to say no more lest all my courage and strength should fail me, but his mocking laugh followed me.

I would not tell my lady what I had heard, lest it should drive her to some rash act; I would wait until the morning, and if indeed this was truth, then Heaven help my poor mistress.

Tuesday came, and Sir Locke was very uneasy in his manner, and watched my lady furtively from under his shaggy brows; she, herself, was quite calm, although she bade me pack a small trunk.

"He will surely not insult me so grossly as to bring that woman here," she said, "but it is best to be prepared."

The day wore by heavily enough, and whilst I was preparing the five o'clock tea I saw Blunsom drive down to the lodge gates; shortly after Sir Locke followed in the dog-cart.

I looked towards my lady. She was ashen white, but she said nothing, although she was shivering, as though with cold. She even took up a book, and pretended to read; and in this way an hour passed by.

Then we heard the sound of wheels, and my mistress ran to a window with a low, sharp cry,—

"Oh, Heaven!" and there she stood a moment as still as a statue; then she turned to me, "Bring me my cloak, quick, quick, Phyllis!" and I hurried to obey.

Hardly knowing what she did, she wrapped herself in it, and, drawing the hood about her head, bade me follow her into the hall.

Some of the servants were already gathered there, but my mistress did not seem to see them, she only waited in stony silence until Sir Locke came in, with a lady upon his arm.

He started when he saw his wife dressed for walking; but, determined to carry out his wicked will, spoke with loud jollity,—

"My dear, let me introduce you to my friend, Lady Clara Kenwood."

My lady flashed one glance at the beautiful, fair, evil face, then, quietly ignoring the offered hand, said,—

"Sir Locke, you have chosen to insult me before your whole household, and from this hour I owe you no duty—I will pay you none. This is the first time a woman with no claim to virtue has ever disgraced your house by her presence."

Lady Clara laughed in a dreadful way.

"You should have prepared me for this, Locke," she said. "I had no idea I was to meet a saint or a prude."

"Look here, Judith," he shouted, "I have sworn you shall entertain my friends right royally, and if you refuse, well and good, you shall never enter my house again."

"I do not intend." Then, to Lady Clara's followers, "Stand aside, if you please, and let me pass!" and they fell back at the word, so that she walked through their midst, awing them to silence by her look and manner.

Once out of the hall, she grasped my hand tightly, and hurried me along until I was breathless.

And so at last we came to the lodge, and mother stood at the door to meet us.

To her my dear mistress said in a low, hard voice,—

"Mrs. Bolton, will you give shelter for a few days to a homeless, friendless woman, maddened with grief and shame?"

"Oh, my lady! my lady! that you should ask such a thing of me! Come in, come in, and rest you. Perhaps it is not so bad as you think."

She laughed bitterly.

"It is worse than you can conceive. But please let me have a room where I may be quiet a little. I want to be alone, I have so much to do."

"My lady," whispered mother, "let it be nothing rash. Remember that the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb, and that your life is not your own."

"You need not fear that I shall take it," my lady said, wearily. "I shall not give Sir Locke so much satisfaction," and she followed mother up the narrow staircase to the room which once was mine.

We did not see her again that night, and no message from the Hall came to us; but in the morning she joined us at our early breakfast, saying she wished to be one of the family, and that mother was on no account to make any alteration in her housekeeping for her sake.

Afterwards she wrote some letters to her friends, and then we sat in the little parlour, my lady trying to fix her attention on some sewing she had begged of mother.

We were very quiet, but outside all the world was gay. The birds singing, the cheery voices of men and children came to us through the open window; and at last, over and above all the sounds of the late summer day came the trampling of horses' feet, and my lady drew back.

Then we heard father go out, and soon quite a company of people rode slowly by, headed by Sir Locke and Lady Clara, who swept the whole house with her beautiful, disdainful eyes.

She said something to her companion, and both laughed out merrily, whilst my lady winced, and her hands lay clenched in the folds of her skirts.

In the few days that followed we saw much of these visitors; and once that dreadful, shameless woman was bold enough to leave her card at the door, but no other creature ventured near, although the country people were beginning to pity my dear mistress, and kindly notes came to her, but not one word of comfort or advice from her unnatural relatives.

And when she had been with us a week, she began to speak of her future.

"I must do something to earn my bread," she said, wearily; "and I have some influence yet. I must try to get some pupils who require a competent and well-bred music-teacher; and Phyllis shall come with me, if you will spare her, Mrs. Bolton?"

Mother looked grave and pitiful, and counselled patience, but my mistress did not seem to hear.

"I must get away from here," she said, "or I may do you harm with Sir Locke, and I shall be happier where I am not known."

So the slow days went on, and folks told dreadful tales of the orgies up at the Hall. One by one the servants were leaving only to be replaced by creatures of Lady Clara's, and Sir Locke was in ill-favour with all.

It was not often my lady ventured abroad, but one evening, being restless, she took up a wrap about her head and shoulders and left the lodge, alone, saying she would not be gone long. I begged I might go with her, but she shook her head.

"I want solitude, Phyllis, to-night."

It was very late when she returned, and there was something so strange in her manner that I was frightened.

She would not look at me, and her usually pale face was flushed, her eyes too bright.

When I followed her to her room she said, almost sharply,—

"Go away, I want to be alone;" then seeing that I was much hurt, with her own gentle, gracious way came towards me, and taking my hand, begged me to pardon her because she was so very miserable, and seemed about to kiss me, but instead, fell suddenly at my feet in a shivering, crouching way.

I would have lifted her in my arms, but she cried,—

"No, no, little Phyllis, not you. I am a wicked woman. Heaven forgive me! It is not meet you should touch me," and prayed me with wild words to go away.

I was more troubled and perplexed than I can say, and it seemed impossible to me that I could sleep, but I suppose I was very tired, for I soon fell into an uneasy slumber from which I was aroused by a small shower of gravel upon my window.

Opening it I looked down, and out of the darkness came a voice I knew was Stephen's.

"For Heaven's sake come down!" it said, eagerly. "I must see you to-night."

## CHAPTER VII.

I was not a little startled, and, afraid of what I scarcely knew, hesitated a moment, and Stephen pleaded urgently,—

"Do come, Phyllis. It is of my lady I must speak."

"Is she in danger?" I asked.

"Terrible danger, but not from Sir Locke. You only can save her."

"Wait for me. I will be with you directly," and I began to dress hastily; then I stole noiselessly down, and opening the door, bade Stephen enter.

The first thing he did was to take my hand and say,—

"Are you still angry with me, little Phyl? Don't you ever mean to forgive me? I know I was a brute to you—"

"You did not come at this hour to tell that?" I answered, trying hard to hide my sudden joy at hearing he loved me still.

"No, indeed, though I've wanted to say it often. Phyl, I was too hard with her ladyship. I didn't make allowance for many things. I hardly understood how evil her life was. I am sorry. And now I've humbled myself so much, dear, won't you take me back again and love me as before?"

"I will love you more," I said, with all my heart. "But now do not talk of ourselves, tell me how I can serve my lady."

"Well, this is just it Phyl, I've been over to see my mother and had stopped later than I meant, so to get quickly back, I came through

Throesl's Wood; you see I know every step of the way, and didn't care a fig about the darkness. But half way through I caught my foot in some brambles and down I went like a shot hare. I wasn't hurt, only very much shaken, and I lay still a little while to get over the shock, and while I lay there, I heard voices, and one was a woman's and before I'd done wondering what brought her there, I recognised it as my lady's. Some instinct told me to keep quiet, and there I lay until they were along side of me, she and Captain Heatherleigh, and she poor soul was crying in an awful way. Suddenly she stopped and said, 'do not tempt me further Grey. I am mad with my misery, the heap'd up insults hang upon me. Yes, I love you, I love you, but love is not for me.'

Then he began to reproach her, that her love was less than his, to tell her she was no longer bound to Sir Locke, that she belonged to him and no other; that if only she would go away with him, he would marry her as soon as possible. He was wrong, it was unmanly of him to take advantage of her love and despair, and yet I pitied him; he so cast about to find excuses for himself, and I think he worships her. Well, the long and short of it is Phyl, that she gave in at last.

"Oh, no! no!" I cried, "It cannot be, oh my lady, my dear unhappy lady;"

"Hush, you'll wake the others. It's all true Phyl, as true as gospel, and though it might be a mean thing to do, I kept quiet and listened to the arrangement the Captain was making. I knew at last my lady was too good a woman to be left to ruin. To-morrow night the Captain is to drive down to Netley Corner, and my lady will meet him there at half past ten, when she counts all here will be safe in bed. Then they will go to Thorpe, from Thorpe to Dover and so to France—after that was agreed upon they parted, and my lady would not so much as give him a kiss, but I heard her sobbing as she went her way, and I heard him groan out a prayer for pardon. I would not hurry here; I wanted to see you alone, and I knew a visit from me would make the old folks suspicious, and perhaps alarm my lady, but now—"

"But now what shall we do?" I cried distressfully, "oh Stephen help me! I seem to have grown stupid with this shock."

"You must keep her from this step, at any cost; think my girl, what it means for her, and—and Phyl, don't ever let her know how you got your information, it would kill her to think I was the tale-bearer; by Heaven, I never shall forgive myself for the words I said to her once."

Don't remember them now Stephen dear; but tell me how to act.

"You must tell my lady you have learned everything, and that if she goes, you go too. There must be no shilly-shally doings; you must be as determined as you were when you sent me away (this with a gleam of mischief in his eye) and now I'm going, or we shall waken the old folks, good-bye little Phyl, good-bye my darling; keep a brave heart, and if ever you prayed earnestly, pray to night for those two poor souls."

And when he was gone, I crept up to my room weeping bitterly, if I had been brave I should have gone at once to my lady; but I am a miserable coward, and until morning dawned, I lay shivering and wretched on my bed.

With the new day my trouble only increased, and I could not muster sufficient courage to speak to my lady.

The change in her almost broke my heart. She avoided me as much as possible, and requested that her meals should be served in her own room, alas! poor lady, they came down untouched.

And there she sat all that live long day with her cheeks like snow, and her eyes all ablaze with shame and pain; her hands were fast clasped, and her figure was quite rigid.

Once, with a spurt of courage, I went to her. "My lady, my lady!" I said, "what

have I done? Are you angry with me? Oh, believe, I love you, and would save you from all—all danger, if only I could."

"Go away," she said, without turning her weary head, "I cannot bear you near me."

"I cannot leave you alone and unhappy, dear mistress!"

"Leave me!" was all she answered, and when I had shut the door I heard her cry out, "Heaven help me! Even she will loathe me soon," and all my soul yearned to comfort her to whom no comfort would ever come.

And so the short day closed in, and at evening my work was not begun; but gradually the way grew clearer before me, and in consequence I became calmer.

I determined not to go to bed, but to wait with my door open until my mistress should pass on her way to the stairs, and then to follow her with entreaties, aye, even threats, rather than leave her to work out her ruin.

She said gently that she should not require my services that night, that she was tired and should soon sleep, and when with a heavy heart I turned to go, she called me back.

"You look pale and ill, Phyllis, and I think I know the cause. Stephen has proved obdurate; but he will soon return. Forget, child, I ever thought of taking you with me. You are best at home; but, Phyllis, when you are happy and honoured, think sometimes with compassion of the wretched woman you once called mistress, and pray that she may not be thrust utterly beyond the pale of grace. And if—little children come to you, be wise and kind to guide them, that they may not become such as I."

And then before I could speak, she had cast a heavy gold chain about my neck, and sobbing—

"Do not disdain to wear it," thrust me from the room.

I stood in the open doorway listening for my lady's step, and when all the house had grown quiet, I heard her gently open her door, then came the soft rustle of her skirts, and I stood still while she passed me.

She went quickly, and breathed hard like one who was running. I heard her slip the bolt, and then I followed.

It was a dark night, and I could only just distinguish my lady's figure before me. How loudly my steps seemed to fall upon the drive! they startled her, and just a moment she halted. In that moment I had come up with her and seized her poor cold hand.

"My lady," I sobbed, "my lady, no! This thing must not be."

Even in the darkness I saw her face as white as snow, and her eyes flashed wildly down on me. I think in this hour she was mad with shame and anguish.

"Go back!" she said, in a strained, unnatural voice, "go back, this is no place for you. You should not have come!"

And then I forgot my fear, "dear mistress," I said, "I know all the truth—the dreadful truth, and am here to save you!"

"To save me!" she cried, passionately. "Ah, Heaven! that is impossible! I am a lost soul; let me go, Phyllis—let me go," and she would have broken from me, but strength came to me in my hour of need, and I held her fast.

"Oh! my lady," I pleaded, "bear your cross a little longer, and surely help must come to you; if you go to-night, think of what all your after life must be, of the shame that will be yours, that will kill your love and—and his. A union so unholy can only bring with it a curse."

"Hush, hush," she said, "my heart is breaking now."

"But there is yet hope for you—if you go there will be none; and when he, your lover, sees you shunned of all good women, finds himself an outcast, and for your sake, he will hate you."

"No," she said, sullenly, "his love, like mine, is eternal."

"It is not love at all that can so degrade its object; oh, my dear, dear mistress, on my

knees I beg you, as you value your immortal soul, return with me; to-morrow you will be glad," and I knelt there in the darkness weeping as though my heart would break; she never shed a tear.

"I shall never be glad again," she said, passionately, "but where I go I shall have love, and all my heart is thirsting for it. Let folks say what they will, I shall not bear them; listen to me, Phyllis, let me for once speak of my wrongs, Heaven knows I have kept silent through long years, until often I think I am going mad."

"I have been scorned, insulted, beaten and reviled by the man whose name I bear; my little innocent baby was made an instrument of torture to me. Ah, Heaven! I could have borne even that had she but lived; but he killed her, he her father! and yet I lived on with him, because I remembered the words of that ceremony which was such a mockery for us."

"Year in and year out he laboured to debase me, to make wickedness attractive to me, to drag me to his own level. There have been times when I have felt I could murder him, when I have rushed away from the mere sight of his drunken slumbers, lest I should avenge my cruel wrongs."

"He stole my lover away, he wrecked and ruined my life, changed a happy girl to a bitter woman, and yet you tell me to be faithful. To-night I am mad, to-night I fling back all his insults, his blows in his face, I scorn to bear his name longer, or to remember the vows I made. I am absolved of them."

"Oh, no, no! and at the eleventh hour help will come; oh, dear mistress, be patient yet awhile longer."

"Patient! That is beyond me now. Stand back and let me pass."

"No; I will arouse my parents; you shall not go to dishonour!"

"Have pity, Phyllis; do not shame me before them. Loose me—let me go. Captain Heatherleigh is waiting for me even now."

But I held her fast, knowing that though she was stronger than I, she would never use violence; and as I wept and prayed, I heard the clatter of hoofs, the rattle of wheels along the road, and drew her farther into the shadows.

"It is a runaway," I whispered, and waited in fear for what would happen next. Soon there came the glare of lamps, and my lady shrieked out wildly, for by their light she saw Captain Heatherleigh's set white face.

In a moment she had wrenched herself free, and run to the gate just as the horse fell, tossing Captain Heatherleigh high over his head, and shattering the dog-cart to atoms.

The animal was up and away in a moment, the man lay dreadfully still, and my lady was crouched beside him moaning in an awful way.

Some one crossed the road to me; it was Stephen, who had been waiting about to give help if help were needed.

"Get her in," he said, hoarsely. "I believe he is dead!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

SEN resisted all our efforts to move her, until I said,—

"Dear mistress, come away; he will need all your care, and Stephen cannot fetch a doctor until he has brought him in. Come, and let us call father."

She rose then but she was so suddenly weak that she could not walk without my support, but in some way I got her into the lodge. Father was up already, the noise having awakened him, and came hurrying down.

"Hallo, Phyl, what be oop?" he cried, "and my leddy too!"

I drew him aside, and told him an accident had occurred to Captain Heatherleigh just outside the gates, and Stephen needed his assistance; then I hurried about making things ready, and presently we heard the slow,



staggering steps of those who bore a burden, and I flung open the door.

They carried him to my lady's own room, and laid him on the bed, then Stephen went away for Doctor Lucas, and mother was with the wounded man. My lady sat with her face hidden, and shivering as with cold; only once, she spoke.

"Does he breathe?"  
"Yes, my lady, and while there is life there is hope."

"You told me help would come at the eleventh hour," she said, with a bitter laugh, and then was silent.

He did not speak again until Dr. Lucas had made a careful examination of his patient; but when he came downstairs, she rose and confronted him with pleading, agonised eyes.

"Tell me the truth," and he, knowing her sad story, answered pitifully,

"My dear lady, I dare not deceive you. He cannot live more than twenty-four hours! I hardly think he will last so long."

She threw out her hands wildly, but recovering herself almost in a moment, questioned,—

"Is he conscious? May I go to him?"

"He is quite conscious, and has asked for you," and she went slowly up to him, and they too were alone until the day dawned.

Then my lady asked for me, and as I entered the quiet room I could scarcely control my sob—so changed was Captain Heatherleigh, so when the poor face upon the pillows, that I knew the doctor had spoken only too truly.

He must have been suffering awful pain, although he smiled up at me, and motioned me to his side.

"You are a good girl, Phyllis, and have served your lady well. You will have your reward," but my lady said nothing, only sat with her deep, dark eyes bent upon his face with such love and such anguish that I could not bear to look at her.

"I can thank Heaven now," went on the feeble voice, "that I was arrested in my downward course. I can see now, Judith, that it was not happiness I would have taken you to but absolute and hopeless misery and shame. Dear one, forgive me!"

Her whole form was shaken with suppressed sobs as she said,—

"I was more to blame than you. Grey, oh, Grey! my darling, do not speak of these things now. Oh, my heart! oh, my heart! I shall not live to bear this anguish long."

"Pray for me," he pleaded but she answered,—

"I cannot pray," and turned to me.

I don't know what I said, I was carried out of myself, but I remember when I lifted my head, I saw a look of peace on my lady's face that had not been there for very long, and the Captain's smile was good to see.

"I know now," he whispered, "there is forgiveness for sinners such as I, even at the eleventh hour."

Later on the clergyman came and then a lawyer who was closeted a long time with the Captain; and many of the gentry came to the house inquiring for him. But towards the close of the afternoon he was left in peace and once again I was sent for.

"Stay with your mistress," he gasped, "she will need your support soon—it is nearly over—nearly over now."

So I sat down in a far corner of the room, waiting with sinking heart for the end that was not very long coming.

When the sun was going down the last great change drew near, and my lady sank on her knees beside the bed, holding one cold hand in her's.

"You will not go back to him!" he said, faintly, "I am afraid for you."

A strong shudder ran through her frame. "I shall not go back!"

"You will find some quiet home, where, at least, you may be content. I have provided for you, Judith. Ah, love! love! if we had but known! if we had trusted more fully in the past. We were happy then—too happy—

and now, I thank Heaven that at the very last you will be with me!"

"I shall not stay long behind," she answered quite calmly, now. "I am a broken woman—broken and old before my time."

"Sweetheart, sweetheart! In this last hour I may have and hold you mine without sin. Lay your lips to mine once, in blessing. How far away you seem! Judith, is this death?"

She bowed her head.

"It is not hard—only that—I leave you! Judith do not fret!"

She lifted her face to his.

"I have no tears now, my darling!"

"Phyllis will take care of you," and she answered, "Yes, dear Phyllis will care for me to the end," and a great stillness fell upon us, broken only by those gasping breaths which each moment grew fainter and slower.

The face upon the pillows was grey and damp with the death dew now, the dark eyes were fast glazing. I thought he was unconscious; but when my lady bent over him, breathing his name lovingly, yearningly, he whispered back, "Yes, Judith! yes, my dear girl—my dear girl!" and put out his hand, blindly.

She clasped it in her own, but she shed no tear, and her face wore a look of peace, I did not then understand.

The Captain moved over so slightly, lips and eyelids quivered, then grew still, and rising I ran to my lady.

"Come away!" I begged, "come away, dearest mistress; don't you see?"

"Gone!" she said, in a strange, low voice. "Gone!" and dropped on her knees once more.

I dared not intrude upon her sorrow, but went out quietly, closing the door behind me, and for a long time we waited for her coming, until, growing anxious, mother went upstairs, and, suddenly, through the house there rang a dreadful scream.

Frightened as I was I ran up to that room, and saw mother standing wild-eyed and white, pointing to my lady. "Oh, look! look! she is dead!"

I could not—would not believe it. My mistress, my beautiful mistress gone away for ever. I lifted her heavy head, and gazed into her white, still, peaceful face, and then I sobbed out, "Heaven has been good to her!" and kissed the poor blue lips.

Doctors said it was heart disease; but we simple folk called it by another name, and spoke of her in hushed voices.

There were many questions to answer concerning her presence at the time of the accident, many guesses as to the relationship between her and the Captain; but none ever knew the truth except Stephen and I, none ever will.

And now that she was gone those who had scorned and condemned her pitied her, and paid some tribute of honour to her whose whole life had been so sad.

Even Sir Locke was sobered for awhile and dismissed his guests; but the funerals took place from the Lodge.

A great crowd of rich and poor filled the churchyard to overflowing, and wondered not a little that my lady should not be with the dead and gone Listers; but that was Sir Locke's one act of grace.

"She would have wished to lie beside him. Let it be so; and now, to-day, two marble crosses stand side by side where my lady and her lover slept until the last day comes.

The Vernons came in troops and shed crocodile tears over the relative they had helped to kill, and talked of her grace and beauty, their affection for her, and then went back to their old amusements and forgot her and their aims against her.

When Captain Heatherleigh's will was read it was found he had made a generous provision for the woman he so loved, and I was astonished to find myself a legatee.

But my dear lady needed nothing now. She was beyond all human wants, all cares and griefs; and knowing how bitterly she

had suffered, and what a cruel thing life must always have been to her, I could not wish her back again.

But the Captain's generosity made things smooth for us.

Father now made no objection to my marriage, and as the Lister Arms at that time became empty, Stephen applied for and obtained the house and license.

There were not a few who said but for my money Stephen would never have married me; but I could afford to laugh at them, remembering our engagement had been renewed before my little fortune came to me.

So I held on my way, and in due time I was married, and I settled down to my new life at the quaint old inn.

We were very happy, Stephen and I, although tears would come, and my heart would be heavy when I thought of my beautiful unfortunate mistress.

The Hall was closed, and Sir Locke had gone to foreign parts, but we heard ill tales of him which I fear were only too true, and just three months after my lady's death he married Lady Clara Kenwood.

Perhaps she hoped by her marriage to get back into the old county families, to be received again by society. But when, six months later, she returned to the Hall, she learned her mistake, and then, as she had never loved her husband, she made his life a burden by her complainings; and to crown all her wickedness ran away with a rich American, and folks said Sir Locke was glad.

Of her we never heard again, but Sir Locke remained at the Hall until all his fortune was spent and his creditors came down upon him.

Then some relatives stepped forward, and offered him assistance; but the old house was sold, and he was sent to live at a cheap foreign place, the name of which I cannot remember, and no one in England will ever see his face again.

But my lady and her lover sleep side by side; the grass grows green on their lowly graves, the flowers bloom brightly there, and when the work of the day is over, I take my little ones to the quiet churchyard, and tell them tales of the beautiful lady who loved me so well, who lifted me so far above my proper place, and in my heart I thank Heaven for the full and divine mercy which snatched her from sin, though even "AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR."

[THE END.]

A WORD FOR OLD JOKES.—"Don't talk to me about chestnuts," said the clown. "I've been in the sawdust ring for years. Time's changed; the old-fashioned tent grew into a seven or eight canvas show, men died who were famous in the business, old ways and old days passed away, but one thing has ever lived. This is the style of joke the clown has always had. One time I grew ambitious. I determined to inaugurate a new era. I had made up my mind that the antiques were of no further value. So I went to work to get up a new lot of jokes and songs. I got some bright fellows to help me, and when I stepped into the ring I had a budget that would have made the reputation of any humorous paper in the country. Did I succeed? Oh, no! I shot out one after another, and there wasn't a laugh. Occasionally some pale, intellectual fellow on the back seat would smile in a way, but that was the best I got. The farmers invariably looked at me with astonishment, and asked each other when the clown was coming on. The lash of the ring-master lost its crack. Even the horses looked a little tired. At last, thick I, I'll get even with you by working off the chestnuts; and what do you think? At the first one they began to smile; at the second they were in a broad grin, and were nudging each other; at the third they were in a roar, and from that time on the performance was a perfect success. I've never tried novelties since. There is more money in back numbers."

## FACETIÆ.

SOUND to the corps—a bugle call to arms.  
"A prudent man," says a witty Frenchman, "is like a pin: his head prevents him from going too far."

MADAME: "Do my hair, Felice, while I am down to breakfast." Felice: "Yes, madame; which colour?" Madame: "The black, please; I am going to a funeral."

SMALL BOY: "Pa, did you know me long before you married her?" Pa: "No; I didn't know her until long after I had married her."

LAWYER: "My conscience troubled me a little last night about that fee I charged Jones yesterday." Friend (astonished): "Your conscience!" Lawyer: "Certainly. I was afraid I had been unjust to myself."

BROWN: "The facial features plainly indicate character and disposition. In selecting your wife were you governed by her chin?" Jones: "No, but I have been ever since so married."

"There's no fun in getting drunk," pleaded the temperance young man with a friend, given too much to conviviality. "Oh, yes, there is!" was the prompt reply; "but getting sober is what raises the mischief with a fellow."

ADORER (nervously): "Isn't that your father's step on the stair?" Sweet girl: "Yes, but don't mind that; it's only a scare. He won't come down. He always stamps around that way when young men stay after eleven o'clock."

BATES declares that when he is sitting still, steadfastly gazing at nothing, his wife has not a word to say to him; but, as soon as he picks up a newspaper or a book to read, she takes a long breath and almost drowns him with an avalanche of questions.

"H'm!" remarked Margreen as he eyed the package in his hands: "that seems to be a rather light pound of butter, Mr. Scudder!" "Pardee me," exclaimed the obliging grocer, blushing; "I had forgotten to put the thick brown paper over the tins. That will change both colour and weight!"

"Is Miss Makepeace the latest belle, very beautiful?" "Yes. Her complexion is divine—I know where she buys it; her teeth—well, they were made by the best dentist in the country, and are perfect; and her hair—Paris cannot produce such another wig! Oh, yes; she's lovely, but it costs a heap of money to keep her so."

NEIGHBOUR BOY: "Ma said she'd lick me if I didn't ask you forgiveness. She's watching me from the window, so out with it or I'll thump you when I catch you alone." One Boy: "Well, I'll forgive you till my big brother gets home, and then if you know when you're well off, you'll stay mighty close to your own house."

ARTHUR, who is forbidden to speak at the table, had his revenge the other evening: As dinner began he was uneasy, and finally said: "Ma, can't I speak just one word?" "You know the rule, Arthur." "Not one word?" "No, Arthur, not until your father finishes the paper." Arthur subsided until the paper was finished, when he was asked what he wished to say. "Oh, nothing; only Nana put the oysters outside the window to cool, and the cat has been eating them up."

"My son," said an economical father, "an express train attains great speed, lightning is prevented for its rapidity; comets are supposed to hurt themselves through space at the rate of millions of miles a day; but, comparatively speaking, all these things are snails, my boy; all snails." "Why, father," replied the young man, hastily puffing a cigar, "what can possibly go faster than lightning?" "A five-pound note, after it is once broken, my son."

SAM: "You provoke me so that I know I shall lose my wits some day!" He: "If you do, I'll advertise for 'em as 'of no use save to the owner, like private papers.'"

SMITH: "So you were sea-sick in crossing, were you, old man? Why didn't you take your sea legs with you?" Mistakenly: "So I did; but how about my land stomach?"

YOUNG HUSBAND: "What? You are twenty-five years old to-day? Why, you told me a year ago, just before the wedding, that you were only twenty." Young Wife (wearily): "I have aged rapidly since I married."

"Well, my boy," he asked cheerfully at the breakfast table, the morning after Cholly had taken the important leap, "how did things go last evening? Did she smile on your proposal?" "No," said Cholly faintly, pushing away a breakfast roll. "She smiled at it."

"You are looking bad, Bromley." "Yes. Been up every night for a week with the baby." "You wished him at the bottom of the Dead Sea many a time, I suspect?" "Why, no. I ain't so brutal as that. But I was very thankful he wasn't twins."

IN THE WITNESS BOX.—Judge: "You reside—?" Witness: "With my brother." Judge: "And your brother lives—?" Witness: "With me." Judge: "Precisely; but you both live—?" Witness: "Together."

A: "Dr. Schumler is one of the nicest doctors in the city. Very frequently he attends patients and never asks them to pay the bill." B: "You don't say so?" C: "Yes, he sues the estate if the executor don't settle it promptly."

JUDGE (to prisoner): "So you were drunk and disorderly. What have you to say?" Prisoner: "I've a good deal to say, your honour, if you'll only give me time to say it." Judge: "Certainly; with pleasure. Sixty days will be enough, won't it? Our object is to please."

"Some idiot has put my pen where I can't find it," growled old Asperity, as he rorted about his office desk. "Ah—aw—yes; I thought so," he continued in a milder tone, as he hauled the writing utensil out from behind his ear.

On his arrival at a fashionable watering-place Herr A—met Herr L— and his family about to return to Berlin with bag and baggage. "What! going back to town so soon? Why, the season is not over yet." L— (whose two daughters have become engaged): "What's the good of staying any longer? I've sold out!"

"Bobby, your mamma tells me you are a very bright boy, and she expects you to be a great man," said Mr. Blossom, as he sat in the parlour, waiting for Bobby's sister. "Ma never does 'spect nothin' right. She don't know what she's talkin' about. She told pa she 'spected you and my sister would be married fore spring, and that was ma's a year ago."

YOUNG GIRL (at fortune-teller's): "What! I'm going to marry a poor man and live in lodgings and have seventeen children? It's outrageous! My friend Sarah had her fortune told her, and you said she was to marry a prince and live in three castles. Here's your shilling." Fortune-teller, with dignity: "Your friend Sarah got a five-shilling fortune, miss."

LITTLE NAN, of four summers, considering it her duty to entertain a lady who is waiting for mamma, enters into conversation.—Nan: "Have you got any little girls?" The Caller: "Yes, I have two." Nan: "D—do you ever have to whip 'em?" The Caller: "I'm afraid I have to sometimes." Nan: "What do you whip 'em with?" The Caller (amused): "Oh, when they've been very naughty, I take my slipper. Nah (most feelingly, as mamma enters): "Y—yo—you ought to use a hair-brush; my mamma does, and it hurts awfully."

ONE little fellow, on being asked if he was not sorry that the school term was over, promptly responded: "No, sir; I'm glad for I want to go to some place where I can boller! I'm tired of keeping still."

The following humors are taken from a German song:—

"When first on earth the truth was born,  
She crept into a hunting horn;  
The hunter came, the horn was blown,  
But where truth went was never known."

In a railway carriage:—An old soldier noticing that his pipe troubled a lady, said to her: "They don't smoke in your regiment, ma'am?" "In my regiment, it is possible," replied the lady, "but in my company, never."

There is no black so black as the blank that appears before a man when he gets up in a public assembly and forgets what he is going to say—unless it is the blank which appears before an amateur in a skating rink when his legs begin to spread and he doesn't know which one to follow.

A: "How's the young doctor doing?" Dr. Pillsbury: "Doing? The upstart! He's stealing my patients, that's what he's doing. Why, last week old Hanks was ill; I told him he couldn't get well. I gave him up. And what does this young puppy do but step in and cure him, and that, mind you, after I'd given him up. Such conduct is a disgrace to the profession, the scandal!"

He was a society dude of the first water, and he had been boring her for an hour with his insipidity. "You—ah—ah—ah—self-made men, don't you, Miss Winthrop?" he drawlingly asked. "Very much, sir," she said. "Ah, thanks. You regard me as self-made, don't you?" "I do, sir. You must have made yourself, for you certainly are not what God intended you to be."

Sam looked simply entranced as she sat in the Union depot the other day. In her lap she held a little Skye terrier, which she was caressing tenderly. Soon the regulation duke blew in the waiting room, and as he passed he remarked, just loud enough for her to hear, "I would I were a dog." "Never mind, you're young yet," she responded sweetly, and he suddenly remembered that his train was waiting.

THURGOOD THURGOOD's orchestra was playing a symphony or something in which the music, at one part, was softened almost to a bird's whisper, when, like the crack of a rifled cannon, came one startling blast from the oboe. The enraged conductor turned savagely upon the player: "What in the deuce do you mean? Just then a pipit blue-bottle fly was winging from the oboist's nose. 'Gott in himmel! I think he was you made, and I play him!'"

YOUNG CHARLEY is taking his first riding lesson. The professor of the riding school—a gentleman with a bald head, ferocious moustache and a pair of enormous riding boots, gave him the usual advice: "And now, my friend, when you have had twenty lessons I will let you know my great secret. I have never fallen from a horse in my life." Charley (hastily): "Here is the price of the twenty lessons; for heaven's sake tell me your secret now." "Thank, I never got on one."

LITTLE JOHNNY McSwilligen surreptitiously sampled his mamma's branded peaches yesterday, and soon after had occasion to use the telephone. A little later Mr. McSwilligen called his wife to the phone to inform her that he would be late getting home. "Yes, I know why," she replied. "Ah, how do you know?" "Why, you're drinking again, and intend to make a night of it." "Indeed I am not," protested McSwilligen. "I have not touched a drop for a year." "O, you can't impose on me that way," insisted his wife. "I can smell your breath." And she hung up the receiver with a rattle that almost dislocated the instrument.



## SOCIETY.

The Queen makes her own tea when travelling.

Mr. Gladstone's favourite tree for telling in the Spanish chestnut.

Lord Tennyson kept his eightieth birthday this month.

The Princesses Victoria and Maud have evidently now been released from strict tutelage, for they mixed freely with their friends and acquaintances on the lawn at Goodwood.

It is an open secret that Princess Beatrice, and therefore her children, will be well provided for under the will of the Empress Eugénie.

It is a point of Court etiquette that on all ceremonial occasions the ladies of the Court should wear studs, and Royal ladies hid gloves.

Florence Nightingale is now nearly seventy years of age, and although she has been an invalid for a long time she has never allowed her interest in every good work to drop or wither.

The most interesting young princesses of Europe is the Princess Royal Wilhelmina Helena Pauline Maria, who will be the next Queen of Holland, and who was almost proclaimed Queen Regent several months ago.

The latest hobby of the Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, is glass painting. The Princess is now designing a stained-glass window as a memorial of the late Duke of Albany, for one of the great Argyll clan, Mr. Campbell of Loch Awe.

The two younger Princesses of Wales—"Tonia" and "Barrie," as they are affectionately called in the family circle—are much of the same mind as their married sister, and greatly prefer Englishmen to representatives of any other nation.

Very interesting is the tale about the study of each other's languages by the Duke of Sparta and his betrothed, Princess Sophie of Prussia. He is learning German, and she is learning Greek, so that they can understand each other, should either lapse into the mother tongue, or rather father tongue. Their love letters are also written on the same lines. Princess Sophie decidedly has the worst of the task, as modern Greek is hardly more alluring than Dutch, Swedish, or Russian.

A good deal of diamond jewellery is made to be picked to pieces and be worn, sometimes separate, sometimes whole. The Russian tiara, stiff though it looks compared with other gracefully shaped coronals, is obtaining much favour, because it can be turned upside down and worn as a necklace. The Princesses of Wales and the Duchess of Fife are not first in the field with this ornament, for the Duchess of Connaught wore one on her wedding day as a necklace. When poised on the head, its hardness of outline demands a careful arrangement of the front hair.

Thus succeeded in getting the Shah up to the first floor of the Eiffel Tower, but could not get him any further. As for the lifts, he would not look at them. After much discussion he started up the iron stairs leading from the ground, and ascended a height of some forty feet. There he remained, clinging to the hand-rail. After a bit he sat down on the stairs. Then by a mighty effort he pulled himself together, and ran violently up the rest of the flight to the next landing, where again he sat down. So by gallant rushes and alternate resting he gained the lowest platform. That satisfied him. They got him to the entrance to the upper lift, they shoved the Visier in, but the Lion of Persia was not to be entrapped, and he had had enough of stairs. For awhile it seemed a question whether he would go down or spend the rest of his reign up there; but the cheers of the crowd, the shouts "Il a peur!" revived his flagging courage, and he finally descended by the way by which he came up.

## STATISTICS.

Men on an average weigh 20 lbs. more than women.

More than half a million houses have been built in London during the last forty years.

It is estimated that there are at least half a million cycles in use in this country.

On an average more than a million telegrams pass through the Post Office every week.

Every square yard of the sun's surface gives out hourly as great a heat as could be obtained by burning six tons of coal.

31,000 persons have been saved in the last 60 years by means of the National Lifeboat Institution.

Between nine hundred and a thousand ships, of all kinds and sizes pass up and down the English Channel every twenty-four hours.

If the sun were a hollow sphere, the earth could be placed in the centre of it, with the moon moving round it at its mean distance of 237,000 miles, and there would still be more than 200,000 miles between the moon and the edge of the sun.

## GEMS.

FLATTERY is a sort of bad money to which our vanity gives currency.

ALL true science begins in the love, not the dissection of your fellow-creature; and it ends in the love, not the analysis, of God.

Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.

ONE of the best rules in conversation is never to say anything which one of the company would rather you had left unsaid.

WHAT must be shall be; and that which is a necessity to him that struggles is little more than a choice to him that is willing.

INCIVILITY is not a vice of the soul, but the effect of several vices—of vanity, ignorance of duty, laziness, stupidity, distraction, contempt of others, and jealousy.

THAT may be sure that he that will in private tell thee of thy faults is thy friend, for he adventures thy dislike, and doth hazard thy hatred; for there are few men that can endure it, every man for the most part delighting in self-praise, which is one of the most universal follies that bewitcheth mankind.

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CARROT JAM.—Boil some carrots quite tender, rub them through a colander, then through a sieve; to one pound of pulp put one pound of white sugar; boil it to a jam; when nearly cold add the juice of two lemons, and the rind grated fine.

THE cleanest and most perfectly polished hard wood floors have no water used on them. They are simply rubbed every morning with a large flannel cloth, which is occasionally dipped in paraffin oil. The floor is rubbed with the grain of the wood, not across it. This is better than waxing.

SHORTBREAD.—Half-pound of flour, quarter pound of butter, two ounces of soft sugar. Knead butter and sugar together, and then knead in the flour; make it into cakes, pinch the edges, and bake. The reason why shortbread is hard is most probably because hard sugar is used—soft is best. If this recipe is followed it won't crack, nor yet be hard, but the ingredients must be weighed exactly, not guessed or measured.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

The days of the Eiffel Tower are numbered. It is not to exist longer than ten years.

It is a fact that the right ear is usually capable of hearing a higher note than the left.

A TAILOR in Berlin has hit upon the notion of making clothes out of paper. A beginning has already been made with waistcoats.

WHEN the Shah is at home, and feels like it, he sits on a throne made up of £8,000,000 worth of precious stones.

A COMPANY has been formed in New York to manufacture sandwiches by the thousand, and retail them through the city in liquor stores, offices, and factories by means of pedlars. A similar plan was tried in London about twelve months ago.

A MAN with an artificial face has been attracting much attention at an English watering place. He has an artificial cheek, eye, and palate, fitted by a surgeon of Bristol. He eats without the slightest difficulty, and speaks distinctly.

A MACHINE for the purpose of writing stenography has been patented. It is constructed on the model of the type-writer, and after an hour or two's practice the newest beginner is able to read off the translation. Stenographers who have tried it say they can produce as much as from 700 to 760 letters per minute.

THE most curious use to which paper is to be put is that suggested by the recent patenting of a blotting-paper towel. It is a new style of bath-towel consisting of a full suit of heavy blotting-paper. A person upon stepping out of his morning tub has only to array himself in one of these suits, and in a second he will be as dry as a bone.

TO "just drop off for a second" is the term applied by the offender to the act of going sound asleep in church with one's head hanging over the back of the pew, the mouth wide open, and the operator snoring like a horse after until the deacon hits him on the head with a collection basket, or the choir rises to sing the last hymn.

THIS is the way the people who live in the Isle of Skye are said to describe their weather:—

Dirty days hath September,

April, June, and November.

From January up to May,

The rain it raineth every day.

All the rest have thirty-one,

Without a blessed gleam of sun;

And if any of them had two-and-thirty,

They'd be just as wet, and twice as dirty.

"HATS OFF!"—Two characteristics mark the Russian people. An intense reverence for the Czar, and an idolizing adoration for the mere picture of any royal or sacred personage. While visiting Kieff, Mr. Morrison, an English lawyer, entered a telegraph office. As he passed through the door he gave the usual continental salute by raising his hat, but he had advanced only a few steps within the room when a loud shout bade him take off his hat. The Englishman went up to the shouting official, and apologized for his unintentional rudeness. "It is not for me, sir," replied the clerk, "it is for the Emperor," and he pointed over his shoulder to an unflattering coloured picture of his Majesty Alexander III. The most sacred entrance to the Kremlin, at Moscow, is the Redmer gate, so called because there is hung in it a picture of the Saviour—a picture of great sanctity. Even the Emperor has to uncover his head as he passes through this gate. The passage under the gate is a long one, but even in a terrific snowstorm every one uncovers his head. The traveller is told that when Napoleon refused to take his hat off, while passing before the sacred picture, a sudden gust of wind took it off for him.

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**ARTLESSNESS.**—A pretty face and well-posed figure.  
**DIANA.**—Yes. Very legible.  
**CHARITY.**—Much too young. 2. No.  
**MAR.**—It is a matter of taste.  
**G. H. C. P.**—A silly, uncleanly habit, but not dangerous.  
**PREPARELITY.**—Second cousins. The marriage would be legal.  
**ANXIOUS SISTER.**—Yours is entirely a question for a medical man.  
**FLOSTY.**—A young woman is under the control of her parents until she is twenty-one.  
**BASHFULNESS.**—Try and think less about yourself and you will soon get over it.  
**AIRY FAIRY LILLIAN.**—The lady is very nice-looking, with splendid eyes and handsome features.  
**J. F.**—A license is required whether you use the gun on your own premises or any one else's.  
**A FARMER'S DAUGHTER.**—There is no way of removing the hair safely, except plucking it out as it grows.  
**A FRIEND.**—You had better take the advice of a solicitor.  
**FRIGHTENED AMY.**—If you are so afraid of infection, we should advise you to keep out of the neighbourhood altogether.  
**ALICE.**—The young man does not seem quite to know his own mind; put him out of your head and think no more about him; there are plenty more in the world.  
**PROCRUSTINATION.**—Have patience; he will come in time. Dress your hair to suit your face; no one else can decide how it shall be done.  
**G. H.**—Henry Wainwright was hung on the 21st of December, 1875. We have not the date of the second execution you inquire about.  
**H. C.**—1. There is a starch for the purpose sold now by most chemists. 2. A tailor, or gentleman's hater, would be the most likely person to give you the information.  
**LITTLE HOUSEWIFE.**—With a spoon; it cannot be cut. Mustard is not generally eaten with mutton, at least in England; it is often done in Scotland. There is no rule about it. It is a question of individual taste.  
**W. F. T.**—The son spoken of can only inherit if specially named in the father's will. His marriage will be legal if solemnised under the name he is usually known by.  
**F. B.**—1. The directions for making the article you mention are too long for insertion in our correspondence column, and not of sufficiently general use to find a place amongst our Household recipes. 2. We do not know of any book on the subject you name.  
**MAY BLOSSOM.**—1. Sponge your ribbon with a little ammonia mixed with warm water, and iron it with a 4½ in cloth over it. 2. The 21st of April, 1877, was on Saturday. We are glad to know that you like the stories.  
**ONE IN DESPAIR.**—It is impossible to tell you how to proceed, unless you can give us some clue to the whereabouts of the family; Germany is a large country. Advertising for people you want would seem to be your best plan.  
**ELAINE.**—1. We never recommend any special tradesman's wares; you must be guided by your own taste and experience. 2. Glycerine and lemon juice will do your skin no harm. 3 and 4. You appear to need medicine; it would be better for you to apply to a chemist or medical man. 5. The writing is careless, but quite legible.  
**VERY MUCH IN LOVE.**—A girl under sixteen has no right to be thinking of marrying without the knowledge and consent of her parents. Tell them at once what you are going to do, and abide by their advice. To marry at your age will be to bring a host of troubles on your head in the future, which you will regret when it is too late to undo what you have done.  
**UNHAPPY IDA.**—If the facts are as you state them, the young lady is acting very foolishly. No "good and virtuous girl" would allow a strange man to keep her in the manner you describe. If she is wise she will get out of the equivocal position she has placed herself in without delay. She must have very little pride or self-respect to accept benefits from a man she has only met casually at a ball. A really decent girl would live on a shilling a day of her own earnings before she would lead an idle life on any man's bounty.  
**GROWING OLD.**—You are quite old enough, and should have had sufficient experience of the world to be able to judge for yourself in the matter about which you ask advice. Too great a disparity between a man and his wife is undesirable, whichever happens to be the elder; but it is more objectionable when the lady has the advantage. There may not seem so much difference now, but as years go on you will find that a woman ages faster than a man, and that when you have begun to go down the hill, and feel an old woman, your husband will be in the prime of life, with all a man's strength and spirit about him. Still, of course, there are many instances in which such marriages as you speak of are suitable and happy; but still we should say, pause before you make up your mind.

**BELENDA.**—Consult a cookery book.  
**MADON.**—The difference is not too much.  
**POLLIE.**—Ask some one in the brigade.  
**FOLLY.**—You will find the whereabouts of the company you mention in the *Era* or the *Stage*.  
**FOND PARENT.**—The child is yours. You can claim it when you please.  
**GRABER.**—No lady would think of asking such a question.  
**PURPLED ONE.**—There can be no impropriety in the little attentions you propose.  
**DICK WHITTINGTON.**—Apply to some one in the business you refer to.  
**HOPE.**—Consult some one in the neighbourhood; we do not know either the house or the lady.  
**IMPECUNIOSITY.**—Your questions are only to be answered by a solicitor; we do not undertake to give legal advice.  
**DOUBTFUL DICK.**—All your questions are about matters which no third person can settle for you; no one can interfere in lovers' quarrels.  
**ORANGE BLOSSOM.**—1. It is a matter of taste. Bridesmaids generally wear bouquets or hats. 2. The bridegroom usually gives the bridesmaids a present each.  
**T. I. T.**—Certainly she can claim. No man with a spark of feeling or honour would wish to evade such a demand.  
**LULU.**—Nothing can alter the fact that you are married whether you live with your husband or not. You cannot marry again while he is alive.  
**MATILDA.**—The young lady knows best herself what reason she has to turn pale at the sight of the gentleman; whether she cares for him or not is best known to herself.  
**JACK AND JILL.**—You can be married anywhere you please by giving proper notice. You do not say whether you wish to marry in a register office or in the usual way at church; the two things are somewhat different.

## TWISTING THINGS ABOUT.

It's very hard to tell, dear,  
 What course is best to take,  
 For love will often pull the way  
 Strict justice should forsake.  
 When such a point you reach, dear,  
 One thing will give you light—  
 Just put yourself in their place;  
 What would you then think right?  
 It seems a little odd, dear,  
 This twisting things about,  
 But such a plan may save heartache,  
 And settle gloom and doubt.  
 So make a rule through life, dear,  
 If you the right would test—  
 Just put yourself in their place,  
 And thus judge what is best.

H. L.

**POPPY.**—1. Take plenty of exercise and avoid eating pastry and sweets, or drinking any kind of malt liquor. 2. Emily, from the German, means a nurse; Walter, also German, a husbandman. 3. A man who flirts cannot be seriously in love with any one.

**M. A. D.**—Valentine is said to have been a bishop, who suffered martyrdom on that day under Claudius the Second, at Rome. The origin of the ancient custom of choosing a valentine has been the subject of much controversy.

**GLADYS.**—Fixing a time for marriage is always an affair for the parties themselves to settle. No young lady would have anything to do with a man who wished to make an engagement abnormally long without giving her any reason for so doing.

**F. A. C. E.**—You are not too old and certainly not too plain for the life you wish to enter, but you will find it a very arduous and precarious one, unless you have sufficient talent to spring to the front at once and remain there. If you have anything certain to do, you had better think twice before you give up good employment for an uncertainty.

**STAGE STRUCK.**—We should advise you to put all idea of the stage out of your head, unless you have the sanction and advice of your parents and friends to guide you. A girl of fifteen is far too young to take the guidance of her life into her own hands, unless under very exceptional circumstances; and the stage is not a profession which any young lady should enter alone and unsupported by the approbation of her friends and relatives.

**A SOLDIER'S LOVE.**—The pay of a shooting smith does not exceed two shillings per day. Any girl thinking of marrying a private soldier must be able and willing to put her shoulder to the wheel and be ready to work hard and do her best to help keep home comfortable. There are snug little homes to be found in barrack quarters where the wife is notable and willing to do her best with the materials at hand. A soldier married with leave has a room and a certain amount of furniture, all of which, though certainly not luxurious, can be turned to very good account. His wife can have her share of the regimental work, for which she is paid, and her home and her earnings are subject to no fluctuations of trade or weather as is too often the case with working men's incomes.

**PAT.**—We do not know the gentleman's nationality.  
**VIOLET.**—No, it would be very bold and forward.  
**ROSE.**—Everyone blushes sometimes; some persons are more apt to do so than others.

**ONE WHO WANTS ADVICE.**—There is almost too much disparity between thirty and seventeen.  
**FIDDLE.**—She cannot claim a divorce on that ground alone.

**A NOVICE.**—If the baby is a girl, the godmother should give it to the clergyman; if a boy, the godfather.

**FROM THE COUNTRY.**—You can get the copy of the certificate of your baptism by writing to the clerk of the parish church where you were christened.

**J. C. E. F. S.**—Do you mean the Scotch war? "fey"! It means having a presentiment, a foreshadowing of something about to happen.

**ROBERT.**—Your question involves far too lengthy an explanation to find space in our correspondence column.

**M. R. D.**—We do not know all the circumstances, therefore cannot tell; we should say not from your letter.

**VIOLET LILLY.**—1. The meaning of misanthropy is "Your qualities surpass your charms." 2. Try glycerine and eau de Cologne mixed together in equal quantities. 3. Cutting the ends of the hair frequently will make it grow.

**LADY BARBARA.**—1. You cannot alter the colour of your hair except by using a dye. Washing it frequently will keep it as light as it can be made naturally. 2. You must wait till the gentleman speaks to you. 3. A damp leather and a dry rubber afterwards should be sufficient. 4. Pot pourri is the nicest thing to give a room a fragrant scent. 5. It is silly for a girl of seventeen to talk about being an old maid. 6. The writing is very careless. 7. The 10th of May, 1873, was on Friday; the 10th of June the same year fell on Monday. 8. There is no rule, say what you please.

**PAGE LUCY (Kimberly).**—You have asked a question which only the husband and wife can answer for themselves. Questions of religion are hardly matters for discussion in our correspondence column. If the gentleman married the lady knowing her creed, and with the full understanding that she would worship in her own way, he should not cavil at her doing so now that she is his wife. There is no reason why differences of religion should break up a home; it is the very last thing that should cause any quarrel; can you not try what a little "give and take" will do. Remember the little old couplet:—

"To bear and forbear is a lesson true  
 As human wisdom ever drew."

**WANTS TO KNOW.**—The arrangements about precedence, &c., at a wedding are generally made beforehand by the parties most interested. The bridesmaids wait for the bride at the church door, standing just inside in a double row. The bride, on the arm of the gentleman who is to give her away, passes between them, and they close up and walk after her in whatever order shall have been previously arranged. The bride at the altar takes her place on the bridegroom's left hand, with her father or nearest male relative who is to give her away, on her left. The bridesmaids stand behind the bride during the ceremony, and the principal holds her bouquet and the glove, which she removes for the ring to be put on. Coming out of church, the bride and bridegroom appear first and drive off together; the rest of the company are marshalled as may be previously arranged.

**ANGELINA SMITH.**—1. In a question of so many thousand miles it is difficult to calculate the exact number to a given spot. We never heard of its being measured. Any map of the Eastern Hemisphere will show the distance between England and the Cape of Good Hope. 2. It is for a young lady's parents and guardians to determine when she shall marry. There is no fixed age; it varies with circumstances, but it is undesirable to marry too young. 3. Constant brushing helps to strengthen the hair, and a little good perfume oil rubbed into the skin of the head stimulates the scalp and promotes the growth of new hair. 4. The writing is extremely neat and good. We never attempt to guess the age of any lady. 5. Spring and summer. 6. Criticism on books is out of place in a correspondence column. 7. Ada, from the Saxon, means happy; Ethel, Saxon, happiness; Ethel, Saxon, protector; Arthur, British, a strong man; Ellen, Greek, light; George, Greek, a husbandman; Rosa, Latin, a rose; Mary, Hebrew, a tear; Rex is the diminutive of Reginald, which is from the Saxon and means kingly.

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